A STUDY OF EYE DIALECT

By

PAUL HULL BOWDRE, JR.

A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE COUNCIL OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
April, 1964

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would, first of all, like to express my appre-
ciation to Professor Thomas Pyles, the chairman of my
supervisory committee, who originally brought to my
attention the matter of Eye Dialect and pointed out its
possibilities as a dissertation topic. Professor Pyles
was a constant source of inspiration, help, and encourage-
ment during the writing of this study, and, for that
matter, throughout the course of my graduate studies at
the University of Florida. Also, I would like to thank
the other members of my committee--Professors Jayne
Harder, John Algeo, Ants Oras, and Oscar Jones--for their
many suggestions and timely help.

Finally, though they are too numerous to name, I
wish to thank the many persons who generously brought to
my attention examples of Eye Dialect. Among these was
my wife, and for her assistance--as well as her patience
and encouragement--I wish to express particular gratitude.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO EYE DIALECT

Eye Dialect defined.--Eye Dialect consists of words
and groups of words which for any one of a number of possible
reasons have been spelled in a manner which to the eye is
recognizably nonstandard, but which to the ear still indi-
cates a pronunciation that is standard throughout the United
States or, in most instances, throughout the English-speaking
world. Some examples will help to clarify this definition.
The spelling sez for the English word says is an example of
Eye Dialect. Sez may be represented phonetically as $[\text{sɛz}]$,[1]
which is the standard pronunciation. Thus the two spellings
represent the same phonetic shape; no difference in what they
represent is detectable by the ear. The eye, however, de-
tects a considerable difference in the appearance of the two
spellings. Because the nonstandard spelling is thus per-
ceived only by the eye and not the ear, the term "Eye
Dialect" is used to describe it. Similar examples of Eye
Dialect are the following nonstandard spellings: minit

---

[1]Where the pronunciation of words or groups of words
are represented by either phonetic or phonemic transcrip-
tions in this study, no effort has been made to indicate
stress or juncture except in those cases where such
indication is necessary to the understanding of the point
being made.

for minute [mɪnɪt] ; likker for liquor [lɪkər] ; wimmen for women [wɪmɪn] .

Writers of dialect do, however, often use non-standard spellings to indicate pronunciations that are standard in a certain region (or regions) of the United States. Such spellings will be referred to in this study as Regional Dialect. An example of a Regional Dialect form would be the spelling of went as wint to indicate the pronunciation [wɪnt] which is standard in some sections of the South.

As a rule, of course, the nonstandard spellings in dialect writings represent pronunciations which are not standard in any section of the country--for example, skeerd for scared or leetle for little. These spellings will be referred to as Substandard Dialect.

Origin of the term.--The term "Eye Dialect" was apparently a coinage of George Philip Krapp[2] and was first used in his chapter "Literary Dialects" in The English Language In America (published originally in 1925). The term appears in the following passage:

> Of the dialect material employed in American literature, several clear kinds may be distinguished. First and most extensive in use is the class dialect which distinguishes between popular and cultivated or standard speech. This calls for no detailed dis-cussion. The impression of popular speech is easily produced by a sprinkling of such forms as aint for

---

[2]Harold Wentworth, American Dialect Dictionary (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1944), p. 203.

> isn't, done for did, them for those, and similar
> grammatical improprieties. This impression is often
> assisted by what may be termed "Eye Dialect," in
> which the convention violated is one of the eye, not
> of the ear. Thus a dialect writer often spells a
> word like front as frunt, or face as fase, or
> picture as pictsher, not because he intends to
> indicate here a genuine difference of pronunciation,
> but the spelling is merely a friendly nudge to the
> reader, a knowing look which establishes a sympathetic
> sense of superiority between the author and reader
> as contrasted with the humble speaker of dialect.[3]

In Krapp's definition it may be noted that Eye Dialect
is considered to be essentially a literary device. It
is primarily as a literary device that it will be discussed
here, although attention will also be given to Eye Dialect
forms themselves, particularly as they represent a problem
in graphics.

Relatively little has been written about Eye
Dialect and an examination of many of the standard works
on language indicates that they neglect the subject
entirely. One scholar, Raven I. McDavid, Jr., has defined
the term as "a crude but common device often utilized to
convey the illusion of substandard pronunciation . . . a
quasi-phonetic respelling of common words."[4] H. A. Gleason,
Jr., stresses that "Eye Dialect is not . . . to be con-
sidered as an actual portrayal of folk or regional speech

---

[3]George Philip Krapp, The English Language in
America (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1960),
I, 228.

[4]Raven I. McDavid, Jr., "American English Dialects"
in The Structure of American English by W. Nelson Francis
(New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1958), p. 541.

so much as a stylized literary device to signal that folk speech is intended."[5]

Krapp has pointed out that Eye Dialect forms are of no scientific interest to the serious student of speech in that they actually tell nothing significant about the pronunciation of a word. However, he recognized their value as a useful literary device. It might also be pointed out that from the standpoint of the study of writing (graphics) they are significant in that they indicate a number of things about the relationship of the written language to the spoken one. This aspect of Eye Dialect forms is considered in Chapter III of this study.

Eye Dialect and the purpose of the writer.--Also of importance in considering whether a nonstandard spelling should be classified as Eye Dialect is the purpose of the writer. Unintentional misspelling through ignorance of the standard spelling is not Eye Dialect. To be classified as an Eye Dialect form, a word must have been purposely misspelled by the writer to produce some calculated effect. If, for example, one noticed a crudely printed sign outside a country store saying "Keroseen--twenty sents per galon" he would be safe in assuming that the misspellings were due simply to lack of schooling rather than to any attempt to attract customers through the use of nonstandard spellings

---

[5]H. A. Gleason, Jr., An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics, rev. ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 406.

of some person. When James Russell Lowell makes Ezekiel
Biglow use such spellings as wuz (was) and cum (come) in
a letter Biglow wrote to the editor of the Boston Courier,
he shows nothing about Biglow's speech, but only that he
(Biglow) cannot spell.[6] The non-spoken, quasi-phonetic
spellings are not Eye Dialect as that term is defined for
the purposes of this study.

Another example of such spellings occurs in one
of the stories of Augustus Baldwin Longstreet in his book,
Georgia Scenes. In this story, "The Gander Pullin," a
hand-printed sign announces the event which gives the
story its title in the following words:

> Those woo wish To be inform heareof, is heareof
> notyfide that edwd. Prater will giv a gander pullin,
> jis this side of harisburg, on Satterday of thes
> pressents munth to all woo mout wish to partak tharof.[7]

Such spellings as Satterday, giv, munth, notyfied, and
several others in the above are quasi-phonetic spellings.[8]
If pronounced as written they would not differ in sound
from a standard pronunciation of the same words. However,
they are not Eye Dialect as they are not meant to represent

---

[6]James Russell Lowell, The Biglow Papers
(Philadelphia: Henry Altemus, 1899), pp. 45-46.

[7]A Native Georgian [Augustus Baldwin Longstreet],
Georgia Scenes (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1897), p. 147.

[8]The term "quasi-phonetic spelling" is used in this
study to mean a spelling which, though nonstandard, would
indicate a standard pronunciation if pronounced. Those
quasi-phonetic spellings which are intended to represent
actual speech are Eye Dialect.

the actual speech of anyone, but only tell the reader that
the maker of the sign has, through ignorance, unintention-
ally misspelled a number of words.

The advertising industry often finds it expedient
to use quasi-phonetic spellings to catch the customer's
eye. Sometimes these spellings are intended to give the
impression of being unintended as when an Atlanta restaurant,
the "7 Steers" advertises itself as "the 1st Resterant ever
to interduce sollid Concrete windows for the Bennyfit of
folks that do Not wont there Freinds to see them Eating
in such a place instead of some fancy place like the Walled
Off Asstoria." The same restaurant serves such items as
"pore man's T-bone," "breckfastburgers," and "tomater juice
cocktale." There are a number of quasi-phonetic spellings
mixed in with nonstandard spellings of other types in the
folksy approach taken by the "7 Steers." However, no
effort is being made here to convey the actual speech of
anyone; it is instead a studied attempt to use pseudo-
unintentional nonstandard spellings for supposedly humorous
effect.

In the naming of products the use of nonstandard,
quasi-phonetic spellings is also prevalent. Such products
as Gleem, Spic 'n Span, Fish Stix, Fyne Suds, and Duz are
illustrative of a tendency that is widespread, and which
probably is connected with legal difficulties involved in
obtaining copyright.

Quasi-phonetic spellings may be found in a variety

of places including the signs advertising eating places
(Pig 'n Whistle, Bill 'n' Joe's, etc.), and in the titles
of popular songs (Alla My Love, I Wanna Thank You, It
Happens Ev'ry Time), etc. None of these uses, however, or
the use in trade names mentioned above is an attempt to
represent the distinctive speech of any character in a
literary work.

     <u>Dependence of Eye Dialect on a standard spelling</u>.--
In order for Eye Dialect to exist in a language, that
language must have a reasonably well-standardized system
of spelling. The usefulness of the spelling <u>enuf</u> as an
Eye Dialect form depends upon the fact that in the English
language there is a standard spelling <u>enough</u> for the same
word. It is necessary also for the reader to know the
standard spelling of the word if the nonstandard spelling
is to produce the desired effect. Thus to some extent the
appreciation of Eye Dialect by the reader depends on his
ability as a speller of standard English, just as the
appreciation of Regional Dialect and Substandard Dialect
depends upon the reader's being acquainted with the standard
pronunciation.

     Since standard spellings are a prerequisite to the
use of Eye Dialect as a literary device, one would not
expect to find the device used extensively in English much
before the nineteenth century. A degree of uniformity in
spelling was being approached by the printing houses during
the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but it remained

for the great dictionaries of the middle and late eighteenth centuries to give their backing and weight of authority to this developing system.[9] In the minds of most people, the "fixing" of English spelling is associated with the dictionary of Samuel Johnson in 1755.

The relationship of the written language to the spoken language.--The use of Eye Dialect also depends upon the relationship or "fit" of the written language and the spoken language. In order for variant spellings of a word to indicate the same standard pronunciation, there must be some leeway in the choice of the writing symbols used to convey a given sound. In English, for example, the phoneme /e/ which occurs in the words fate and bait is written as the letter a in the first and as the digraph ai in the second. The /i/ of meat is represented in writing by the letters ea, while the same phoneme in meet is represented by the letters ee.

The fact that the same sound may be spelled more than one way thus makes Eye Dialect possible. In languages where the "fit" of the written and spoken forms is relatively exact, where each sound may be expected to appear in writing as only one letter or combination of letters, the opportunity for the use of Eye Dialect is much more limited than it is in English.

[9]Stuart Robertson, The Development of Modern English, rev. by Frederick G. Cassidy (2nd ed.; New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1954), pp. 334-35.

The scarcity of regional dialect differences in
the United States.--Probably the prevalence of Eye Dialect
in the works of a number of American writers depends, at
least partially, on the relative scarcity of regional
dialect differences in the speech of people in the United
States. Baugh has pointed out that by the beginning of the
nineteenth century the uniformity of American English had
been noted and commented on by a number of writers and
travelers. Speaking of American English, Baugh comments
on the fact that we now have a standard which is uniformly
followed throughout the country with some minor variations:

> It is not an imposed standard or a class dialect,
> except in so far as different levels of usage must
> be recognized here as in other countries. Complete
> uniformity cannot be claimed for this standard. In
> New England and the South there are particular
> differences, as of pronunciation, that are easily
> recognized. . . . But just because they can be
> perceived it is easy to exaggerate them, while losing
> sight of the great majority of features which the
> speech of all parts of the country shares in common.[10]

The lack of a large number of distinguishing features,
particularly in pronunciation, obviously makes it difficult
for a writer to give a regional flavor to the speech of
his characters. In the case of a number of writers, it
would appear that Eye Dialect has been used in an effort
to satisfy this need. When a reader is told that a
character is from a certain region, he naturally assumes
that the nonstandard spellings which he sees in the

---

[10]Albert C. Baugh, A History of the English Lan-
guage (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1957),
p. 416.

representation of that character's speech represent genuine
regional peculiarities of pronunciation. In reality,
however, he may be encountering a good many Eye Dialect
forms.

Eye Dialect contrasted with other methods of
indicating nonstandard speech.--There are two main ways a
writer may indicate that the speech of one of his charac-
ters is other than standard. The first way involves the
use of nonstandard morphological or syntactical construc-
tions such as "I seen it" or "It don't make no difference."
These constructions are meant to convey to the reader the
impression that the character uses nonstandard grammar.
The second method involves the use of nonstandard spellings.
These spellings are meant to convey to the reader the
impression that the pronunciation of the character is in
some way nonstandard. The writer, for example, may
indicate a Negro pronunciation of never by spelling it
nebber.

The quasi-phonetic spellings which constitute Eye
Dialect belong, of course, to this second method. Also
belonging to it are the nonstandard spellings which
constitute Regional Dialect and Substandard Dialect. Quite
often the two methods--the use of nonstandard morphological
and syntactical constructions to represent nonstandard
grammar and the use of nonstandard spellings to indicate
nonstandard pronunciation--are used together by a writer
in portraying the speech of a dialect character. The

following passage from the speech of Sut Lovingood, who
speaks what is intended to be the speech of an uneducated
Tennessee mountaineer in George Washington Harris'
_ut _Lovingood Yarns_, illustrates the combined use of the
methods:

> "What caused the death of Mrs. Yardley, Sut?"
> **"Nuffin, only her heart stop't beatin' bout**
> losing a nine dimunt quilt. True, she got a skeer'd
> **hoss tu run over her, but she'd a-got over that ef a**
> quilt hadn't been mixed up in the catastrophy. Yu
> **see quilts wer wun ove her speshul gifts; she run**
> strong on the bed-kiver question."[11]

In this passage nonstandard morphological and syntactical
constructions are represented by she run strong and there
are a number of nonstandard spellings which appear to
represent substandard Dialect, such as nuffin, dimunt,
skeer'd, and bed-kiver. Eye Dialect is plentiful also;
the quasi-phonetic spellings stop't, speshul, wer, ove,
and wun are Eye Dialect, and as such would immediately
strike the eye of the reader but not the ear. Catastrophy
may or may not be Eye Dialect in that this spelling is
possibly intended to show that Sut mispronounces the word
as ['kætə,strofɪ].

Role of the reader.--Actually, the value of Eye
Dialect as a literary device depends upon the reader's
tendency not to analyze the nonstandard spellings, but to

---

[11]George Washington Harris, "Mrs. Yardley's
Quilting" in Richmond Croom Beatty et al., The Literature
of the South (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1952),
p. 400.

assume that they do represent some real pronunciation difference. Forms such as _sez_, _wimmen_, and _minit_ (says, women, minute) represent the only standard pronunciations for all of the English-speaking world. The assumption of readers, which has become a sort of literary tradition, that such forms represent some pronunciation peculiarity has furnished writers with a useful and easily manipulated literary device, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER II

EYE DIALECT AS A LITERARY DEVICE

In using nonstandard spellings to portray the
speech of a character, the literary artist is faced with
the problem of deciding how far he wishes to go in
attempting to convey the peculiarities of the speech he has
in mind. Despite the fact that regional speech differences
are not plentiful in the United States, it is still exceed-
ingly difficult to represent these differences, plus the
peculiarities of substandard speech, by means of the
conventional alphabetical symbols. Nor is it ordinarily
the writer's intention to give an exact representation of
all the peculiarities of a character's speech. Rather he
is concerned with certain artistic values--he wishes to
choose telling details of pronunciation which will give the
reader the impression that his character is an actual
person. He does not wish to clutter the reader's mind with
too many small details, nor does he wish to resort to such
complicated or unusual spellings that the reader will have
difficulty in deciphering what the character is saying.
The reader's attention should be free to appreciate the
artistic values rather than be taken up in trying to read
the words themselves.

George Philip Krapp has pointed out that "it may be safely put down as a general rule that the more faithful a dialect is to folklore, the more completely it represents the actual speech of a group of people, the less effective it will be from a literary point of view."[1] It is for this reason that the use of Eye Dialect is often justified even though it actually represents nothing more than a standard pronunciation. It is better to use Eye Dialect than to burden the reader with outlandish forms intended to represent all the intricacies of regional speech or substandard speech. Eye Dialect does provide a hint to the reader that the speech of a character in some way differs from normal, conventional speech. At the same time, because Eye Dialect consists of quasi-phonetic spellings which represent what are the reader's own pronunciations, it may usually be deciphered by the reader without much difficulty.

It is true that the same nonstandard spelling may on occasion represent different pronunciations to different readers. For example, the spelling haid for head may appear to one reader to be intended to rhyme with aid, in which case it would be a Substandard Dialect form perhaps intended to represent a pronunciation heard in some parts of the South, but recognized in all regions as

---

[1]George Philip Krapp, "The Psychology of Dialect Writing," The Bookman, 63 (Dec., 1926), 523.

nonstandard. To another reader it may appear that haid
is intended to rhyme with said--in which case it is an
Eye Dialect form. The difficulty suggested here is discussed
in Chapter III, which deals with the problems in graphics
which Eye Dialect involves for an author. For the present
chapter it has been necessary for me to use my own judg-
ment in determining what pronunciation a certain spelling
is intended to represent.

To arrive at the status of various pronunciations
indicated by dialect forms, Kenyon and Knott's A Pro-
nouncing Dictionary of American English has been used.
This dictionary has as its purpose "to give only pronun-
ciations that are in general cultivated use--to give none
that need to be avoided as incorrect or substandard."[2] It
records "Cultivated Colloquial English," not the English
of "formal public address or public reading." If a non-
standard spelling appears to represent a pronunciation that
according to the dictionary is standard throughout the
United States, it is considered Eye Dialect. While it is
true that there is a theoretical difficulty involved in
using a relatively recent (1953) dictionary to determine
mid-nineteenth century standard pronunciations (as has been
necessary at times in this study), in actuality changes in

---

[2]John Samuel Kenyon and Thomas Albert Knott, A
Pronouncing Dictionary of American English (Springfield,
Mass.: G. C. Merriam Company, 1953), p. xxvii.

standard pronunciations have been so slight during the period covered by the study that its use presents no real difficulty.

In discussing the use of Eye Dialect as a literary device by American writers it is obviously not possible to examine all the works of every American writer and to point out each example of its use, nor would there be any value in doing so. Therefore a number of American authors have been selected who have made use of Eye Dialect, and examples from their works are given in an effort to indicate how they have used it and for what purposes.

The first writer to be considered is the "frontier humorist," George Washington Harris. Harris belongs to that group of writers which includes Seba Smith (Major Jack Downing), Johnson Jones Hooper (Simon Suggs), David Ross Locke (Petroleum V. Nasby), H. W. Shaw (Josh Billings), T. C. Haliburton (Sam Slick), Charles Farrar Browne (Artemus Ward), and others who developed humorous "dialect characters" during the period from 1830 until the end of the Civil War. Harris called his "dialect character" Sut Lovingood. Sut is supposed to be a rough, "ornery" Tennessee mountaineer. His idea of a good time is the playing of crude, sometimes cruel, practical jokes. Harris, apparently to give the reader the pleasure of being con- tinually aware that Sut is a complete ignoramus and buffoon, uses a nonstandard spelling for practically every word Sut says. Sut's speech is a concentration of

Substandard Dialect, some Regional Dialect and a great
deal of Eye Dialect. Here is a sample of Sut's way of
speaking:

> Well, to cum tu the serious part ove this
> conversashun, that is how the old quilt-mersheen
> an' coverlidloom cum tu stop operashuns on this
> yeath. She had narrated hit thru the neighborhood
> that nex Saterday she'd giv a quiltin--three quilts
> an' one cumfurt tu tie. "Goblers, fiddils, gals an'
> whiskey," were the words she sent tu the menfolk,
> an' more tetchin ur wakenin words never drap't ofen
> an 'oman's tongue. She sed tu the gals, "Sweet
> toddy, huggin, dancin, an' huggers in 'bundance."
> Them words struck the gals rite in the pit ove the
> stumick, an' spread a ticklin sensashun bof ways,
> ontil they scratshed thar heads wif one han' an'
> Thar heels wif tuther.[3]

Probably the most noticeable aspect of this kind
of writing is the heavy concentration of nonstandard
spellings. Such writing is not easy to read. There is
too much variation from conventional spelling to allow a
reader to skim over a passage and get its meaning. There
are words which defy the reader's effort to decipher them
such as "coverlidloom" and "quilt-mersheen." (These may
stand for "coverlet loom" and "quilt-machine" but it
requires some study to arrive at even this probable
solution.) The many Eye Dialect spellings indicate that
the writer is not making a serious effort to convey any
regional or class dialect. Rather he is using an easy
method of conveying to the reader the impression that Sut
Lovingood is funny, that he is an ignorant yokel to be

_____

[3] Harris, p. 400.

laughed at.

The spellings which are easily recognizable as
Eye Dialect include tu (to), cum (come), ove (of),
conversashun (conversation), operashuns (operations),
Saterday (Saturday), cumfurt (comfort), fiddils (fiddles),
wer (were), sed (said), rite (right), sensashun (sensa-
tion), and scratshed (scratched). There are other
spellings (such as an' in an unstressed position) that
also may be considered Eye Dialect upon closer examination.
It is not necessary, however, to consider each individual
nonstandard spelling in writing of this type to understand
what purpose the author has in mind. He is not attempting
a scientific delineation of a regional or class dialect,
but is "laying it on thick" to give the reader a laugh.
It is doubtful whether many readers today would have the
patience to wade through such a conglomeration of non-
standard spellings. They no longer seem humorous enough
to justify the deciphering effort involved.

This use of "comical" misspelling is equally
noticeable in the writing of David Ross Locke. His dialect
character, Petroleum V. Nasby, writes letters that are
full of quasi-phonetic spellings. There is little effort
made to indicate regional peculiarities. Nasby's spellings
are not actually Eye Dialect in that they would appear to
indicate not the speech of anyone, but the poor spelling
of Nasby. However, to show how the writer has used quasi-
phonetic spellings liberally to create a dialect character,

a brief passage is included here:

> The sole uv Nasby's foot knoze no rest. Eternal
> viggillance is the prise uv liberty, and a old Dimekrat
> who hez never skratched a tikkit and who never spile
> his likker by delooshn, kin work in these perilus
> times. I am engaged in organizin sosieties on the
> basis uv the Union ez it wuz, the Constitooshn ez it
> is, and the nigger wher he ought to be. This
> imployment soots me. The apossel bizness I like.[4]

(The spellings which to me seem to be quasi-phonetic are
underlined.)

The surprising thing about the letters of Nasby
is that they are fairly easy to read. Unlike the conver-
sation of Sut Lovingood, Nasby's nonstandard spellings are
almost all quasi-phonetic and easily recognizable. When
Nasby says in a typical sentence taken from another chapter,
"I maek no boasts uv what my speshel clames air, but I hav
dun the party som servis"[5] about half of the words are
misspelled and yet the reader has little difficulty
recognizing them. It would appear to be the Substandard
Dialect and Regional Dialect that is mixed in with Eye
Dialect in Sut Lovingood's speech that make it difficult
reading--not the Eye Dialect itself.

Dialect writing very similar to that of Locke was
used by a more famous humorist, Charles Farrar Browne.
His dialect character, Artemus Ward, has this to say in a

---

[4]David Ross Locke, Divers Views, Opinions and
Prophecies of Yoors Trooly Petroleum V. Nasby (Cincinnati:
R. W. Carroll & Co., 1866), p. 119.

[5]Ibid., p. 47.

"Fourth of July Oration, Delivered July 4, at Weathersfield, Conn., 1859":

> Feller Citizens--I hain't got time to <u>notis</u> the growth of Ameriky <u>frum</u> the time when the Mayflowers <u>cum</u> over in the Pilgrim and <u>brawt</u> <u>Plymmuth</u> Rock with him, but every <u>skool</u> boy <u>nose</u> our <u>kareer</u> has been tremenjis. You will excuse me if I don't <u>prase</u> the <u>erly</u> settlers of the <u>Kolonies</u>. <u>Peple</u> which hung idiotic old <u>wimin</u> for witches, burnt holes in Quakers tongues and <u>consined</u> their feller critters to the <u>tredmill</u> and <u>pillery</u> on the <u>slitest</u> <u>provocashun</u> may have <u>bin</u> very nice folks in their way, but I must confess I don't admire their <u>stile</u>, and will pass them by.[6]

The many underlined quasi-phonetic spellings indicate the extent to which Browne depended upon them in making his character comical. It is interesting to note that Artemus Ward misspells such simple words as <u>come</u>, <u>from</u>, and <u>been</u> while he is able to spell such words as <u>idiotic</u>, <u>growth</u>, <u>witches</u>, <u>Quakers</u>, and <u>tongues</u>. There is no indication, however, that Browne was attempting to follow any consistent pattern of misspelling.

Writers like G. W. Harris, Locke, and Browne are representative of a group that made use of quasi-phonetic spellings haphazardly to indicate the lack of education of their comic characters. In some cases--Sut Lovingood, for example--these quasi-phonetic spellings are intended to convey a character's speech and may properly be called Eye Dialect, while in others--such as Petroleum V. Nasby--

---

[6]Charles F. Browne, <u>The Complete Works of Artemus Ward</u> (London: Chatto & Windus, 1910), pp. 123-124.

the spellings are contained in letters and are only evidence
that the dialect characters cannot spell. In either case,
there is no careful effort to convey either substandard
speech or regional speech but only to give a crude, broad,
undifferentiated "comical" effect.

Another writer who developed well-known dialect
characters was James Russell Lowell. In considering
Lowell's use of dialect in The Biglow Papers, the letters
from Ezekiel Biglow and Hosea Biglow must be considered
separately from what Lowell in the introduction calls "the
metrical portion of the book." The letters are replete
with nonstandard spellings, many of them quasi-phonetic
spellings, which indicate only that the writers of the
letters are uneducated men. These letters make frequent use
of sed for said, wuz for was, cum for come, shure enuf for
sure enough, and other similar and easily recognizable
quasi-phonetic spellings. The "metrical portions" on the
other hand are much more sparing in their use of nonstandard
spellings. In them it is apparent that Lowell has made an
effort to carry out the rules for writing the genuine Yankee
dialect which he set forth in his introduction. To quote
Lowell: "In the metrical portion of the book, I have
endeavoured to adapt the spelling as nearly as possible to
the ordinary mode of pronunciation."[7]

---

[7]James Russell Lowell, The Biglow Papers
(Philadelphia: Henry Altemus, 1899), p. 37.

The rules Lowell gives us are as follows:

1. The genuine Yankee never gives the rough sound to the r when he can help it, and often displays considerable ingenuity in avoiding it even before a vowel.

2. He seldom sounds the final g, a piece of self-denial if we consider his partiality to nasals. The same of the final d, as han' and stan' for hand and stand.

3. The h in such words as while, when, where, he omits altogether.

4. In regard to a, he shows some inconsistency, sometimes giving a close and obscure sound, as hev for have, hendy for handy, ez for as, thet for that, and again giving it the broad sound it has in father, as hansome for handsome.

5. To the sound ou he prefixes an e (hard to exemplify other than orally).

6. Au, in such words as daughter and slaughter he pronounces ah.

7. To the dish thus seasoned add a drawl ad libitum.[8]

It is not necessary here to examine the metrical

parts of The Biglow Papers to see how closely they follow

---

[8]A brief comment is perhaps in order on Lowell's phonetics as they are somewhat amateurish. For example, in Rule 2, Lowell is obviously referring only to the "final g" in present participles--not to "final g" in sing, thing, dog, etc. And by "final g" he actually means the velar nasal [ŋ] . In the same rule he refers to the loss of the "final d" after n, though the wording of the rule makes it appear that he means all "final d's." Nor does he distinguish between sounds and letters, but speaks of the omission of h in Rule 3 when he means the omission of the sound [h]; in Rule 5 he refers to "the sound ou" when ou is, after all, not a sound but a sequence of letters. His use of the term "drawl" in connection with the "Yankee Dialect" is curious, since that term is now popularly considered a characteristic of Southern speech, and is seldom applied to New England speech.

the rules given[9] but it is important to note that there is
no provision here for Eye Dialect spellings. Yet in
examining one of Hosea Biglow's poems, "The Debate in the
Sennit," a number of such spellings are found--sennit for
senate, sez for says, bisness and bizness for business,
ough'to for ought to, wuz for was, du for do, tu for to,
fact'ry for factory and priv'leges for privileges--which
represent pronunciations very commonly occurring in
Standard English. None of Lowell's rules appear to account
for these particular spellings and it would appear that,
as Krapp noted, his practice is more complicated than his
rules. It seems probable that a number of the spellings
were already established as traditional Eye Dialect forms,
and that Lowell simply made use of them as a matter of
course. It is also probable that Lowell, despite his
serious intentions, allowed some to slip in through care-
lessness--his rules, after all, indicate that he was not
really a very keen observer of speech. Besides, it is not
difficult to write an Eye Dialect form without realizing
it. As Sumner Ives has observed: "Some of it [Eye Dialect]
. . . seems to be inevitable even in the most carefully

---

[9]Such an examination was made of Lowell's "The
Courtin" by George Philip Krapp in The English Language
in America, I, 233-236. His conclusions were that the
rules given were not particularly apt for setting forth
the Yankee dialect and that Lowell often did not follow
them.

done literary dialect."[10] Why then do these lapses from
the portrayal of "genuine Yankee" dialect traits not
disturb the reader? The answer seems to be that the
reader is willing to accept all variant spellings as
evidence that the character who uses them is the kind of
person the author has indicated he is. The author lets
the reader know that Ezekiel and Hosea Biglow are unedu-
cated yokels in a number of ways--the comments in the
introduction, the incorrect syntax and spelling in the
letters, the intellectual content of the letters and poems.
In the introduction he assures the reader that in the
metrical portions the spelling has been adapted to indicate
Yankee pronunciation. The reader is satisfied. He reads
the Eye Dialect forms without pondering whether they
actually do represent pronunciation differences. Only the
serious student of dialect is likely to note that Eye
Dialect is scattered throughout the metrical portions.

In 1871 Edward Eggleston wrote The Hoosier School-
master, a book which he later in a preface to the edition
of 1892 called "the file leader in the procession of
American dialect novels."[11] Certainly it was a forerunner
of a number of novels and short stories which dealt with

---

[10]Sumner Ives, "A Theory of Literary Dialect,"
Tulane Studies in English, vol. II, (1950), p. 147.

[11]Edward Eggleston, The Hoosier Schoolmaster (New
York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1913), p. 6.

particular locations in the United States. These literary
works concentrated on depicting the actual customs, speech,
habits, and mannerisms of natives of a certain area; that
which gave rise to them is often called the "Local Color"
movement in American Literature. Among the leaders of this
movement were: Bret Harte, Mark Twain, and Joaquin Miller,
who wrote of the West; Joel Chandler Harris, Lafcadio Hearn
and George Washington Cable, who wrote of the South; Sarah
Orne Jewett and Mary Wilkins Freeman, who wrote of New
England; Edward Eggleston, Joseph Kirkland and Hamlin
Garland, who wrote of the Middle West.

    As the aim of the local colorists was to give to
the reader the full flavor of the locales they had chosen
to depict, often with an accent on what was quaint and
picturesque, it was natural that they would seek to provide
an impression of the actual sound of the speech of their
characters. Consequently they made some use of genuine
Regional Dialect. The motive of the local colorists in
writing dialect thus differed from the motive of the pre-
Civil War dialect writers such as G. W. Harris, Locke,
Browne and Lowell. While the earlier writers, for the most
part, merely wished to make their dialect characters appear
ignorant and rustic (and thus funny), the local colorists
wished to display the actual regional speech of their
characters. Thus while the earlier writers were content
to mix together Eye Dialect, Regional Dialect, and Sub-
standard Dialect at random, the local colorists were

confined to the use of Regional Dialect for depicting the standard speech of the locale, or to Substandard Dialect for depicting its nonstandard speech. Any Eye Dialect that crept into the nonstandard spellings of the local colorists would, at least in theory, constitute a mistake on the part of the author. In actual practice, however, there is enough Eye Dialect in the writing of some of them to indicate either that they were often inaccurate in their attempts to analyze the characteristics of the regional speech or substandard speech they wished to portray, or else that they recognized Eye Dialect, perhaps unconsciously, as a useful and legitimate literary device.

A study of the works of Edward Eggleston by W. L. McAtee reveals a number of Eye Dialect forms. In the section called (by Mr. McAtee) "Phonetic or Near-Phonetic Spellings" we find the following forms used by Eggleston: akordin' for according, apposil for apostle, fether for feather, giv for give, ov for of, penitenshry for penitentiary, rite for right, and tho' for though.[12] All of these, save possibly the first, appear to be Eye Dialect and there are in addition a number of other spellings listed by Mr. McAtee in other sections of his study which may be classified as such, either wholly or in part. For example, there are the spellings liker for liquor, and wuz for was, both of

_____

[12] W. L. McAtee, Studies in the Vocabularies of Hoosier Authors: Edward Eggleston (1837-1902) (Chapel Hill, N. C.: Printed by the Compiler, 1961), p. 124.

which are Eye Dialect in their entirety. Some examples
of words that are at least partially Eye Dialect are
keerlessness (carelessness) and kyard (card) in which k
has replaced c without indicating any change in the
initial sound of the words (in the case of both the k is
preferable to c also because they might be read with an
initial [s]), nuff (enough) in which the nuff has replaced
nough with no phonetic significance, and larf (laugh) in
which f has replaced gh, also with no change in sound.
Eggleston spells creature on one occasion as creetur--
the replacing of ea by ee is certainly Eye Dialect, but
there is no way of knowing with certainty whether he
intended the t of the last syllable to represent [č], as
it does in the standard spelling, or [t], as it does in
such nonstandard spellings as critter. He spells the
Substandard Dialect form meaning once as oncet, onst, and
wunst. The last of the three spellings is partially Eye
Dialect in its use of the quasi-phonetic spelling wuns to
represent the usual spelling once. The addition of the t
at the end, of course, makes the word Substandard Dialect
rather than Eye Dialect, since the pronunciation indicated
is not standard in any section of the United States, or,
for that matter, the English-speaking world. Of the three
spellings used by Eggleston, however, the wunst spelling
best represents the sound of the word to the reader, and
this is an example where quasi-phonetic spelling is
actually necessary to prevent conveying the wrong sound--

the other two spellings could easily be taken to represent
[ɔnsɛt] and [ɔnst] .

There can be no doubt that Eggleston was making
a serious attempt to give a true picture of Hoosier
speech. He dedicated The Hoosier Schoolmaster to James
Russell Lowell "whose cordial encouragement to my studies
of American dialect is gratefully remembered." The same
book contains numerous footnotes in which the author
explains why he is using certain spellings and how they
represent some particular characteristic of pronunciation.
But it is difficult to understand how Eggleston could
have thrown in spellings such as rite for right or giv
for give without realizing that they do not convey any
peculiarity of Hoosier pronunciation but rather simply
standard pronunciation. It seems more likely that he
willingly used a certain amount of Eye Dialect knowing
that the reader would not hold him to strict account for
it, or perhaps he was unconscious of it.

One of the most accurate of the local colorists
in his efforts to convey regional (and substandard)
speech was Joel Chandler Harris, the author of the well-
known Uncle Remus stories. Harris was attempting to
convey the speech of an old-fashioned Georgia plantation
Negro in these stories. Sumner Ives, who has made a
study of the nonstandard spellings found in them, has
said that the fact "that these spellings can actually be
interpreted, that their interpretation reveals a consistent

phonology, and that this phonology is clearly based on accurate observation of a genuine folk speech are all matters of considerable importance to judgments of Harris as a literary craftsman."[13] Ives comes to the conclusion that "we can be reasonably sure that the folk speech of the plantation Negro has been successfully used as a literary medium, even though we cannot regard the result as the equivalent of a precise phonetic transcription."[14] Krapp has said, "No more skilful literary transcriptions of Southern speech, both the speech of whites and of negroes, have been made than those of Joel Chandler Harris."[15]

Despite the fact that Harris is recognized as an unusually accurate observer of speech and far above average in his ability to convey speech peculiarities on the printed page, it is noticeable that some Eye Dialect has found its way into his writing. The fact that there is very little of it, considering the large number of nonstandard spellings he uses, indicates that Harris was making a real effort to see to it that his nonstandard spellings actually represented pronunciation differences. It also bears out, however, the comment of Ives mentioned

---

[13]Sumner Ives, "The Phonology of the Uncle Remus Stories," Publications of the American Dialect Society, XXII (November, 1954), p. 3.

[14]Ibid., p. 7.

[15]Krapp, The English Language in America, I, 240.

earlier, that some Eye Dialect is inevitable. The following are "nonsignificant" spellings found by Ives which may be classified as Eye Dialect: bin (been), b'ilt (built), bizness (business), meezles (measles), duz (does), sum (some), lim's (limbs), clime (climb), impatients (impatience), fassen (fasten), lissen (listen), comp'n'y (company), squir'l (squirrel), half n' our (half an hour), shake um (shake them), youk'n (you can), wuzzent (wasn't). The list is not complete in that Ives lists perhaps twice its number of "non-significant" spellings during the course of his study. However it is sufficient to indicate how Harris seems to have slipped up on such typical Eye Dialect spellings as bin, sum, and duz--that is, he almost certainly unintentionally used them. Perhaps he was merely following the tradition that often used these Eye Dialect forms in place of the standard ones. But if such were the case, it hardly seems that he would have gone to such pains to indicate peculiarities of pronunciation in other words. The list also shows a number of less usual Eye Dialect forms such as meezles for measles. It is my opinion that both the usual and unusual Eye Dialect forms were used by mistake.

In the ratio of Eye Dialect forms used to total number of nonstandard spellings, Harris is certainly more sparing in his use of Eye Dialect than another Southern writer, Sidney Lanier. Lanier has used nonstandard spellings in only a few short poems and in a small portion

of his novel, Tiger Lilies. Yet it is not difficult to find Eye Dialect forms within this relatively small body of dialect writing. Lanier has represented the speech of both poor whites and Negroes. There is an interesting comment in the introduction to the first volume of The Centennial Edition of the Works of Sidney Lanier:

> Though the modern attitude favors the use of idiom and speech tune rather than dialectal misspelling--feeling a false exaggeration in the phonetic representation of illiterate speech which implies that educated speech conforms to standard spelling--Lanier was more meticulous and accurate than most of his contemporaries in recording the actual language of the Negro, as well as of the Cracker.[16]

This evaluation of Lanier as being "meticulous and accurate" in "recording the actual language" seems, at first glance, contradictory in view of his rather extensive use of Eye Dialect. However, at least part of his use of Eye Dialect is clever and purposeful. He appears to make certain conscious uses of it in a number of instances when he wishes to gain a special effect.

One of his most striking Eye Dialect spellings is the use of cum for come. It is present in what is probably Lanier's best-known dialect-poem, "Thars More in the Man Than Thar Is in the Land." The poem concerns a "cracker" who sells his farm, leaves to seek his fortune in Texas, and returns emptyhanded five years later. The

---

[16]The Centennial Edition of the Works of Sidney Lanier, ed. Charles R. Anderson and others (10 vols.: Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1945), I, xlix.

stanza is as follows:

> And thar was Jones, standin' out at the fence,
> And he hadn't no waggin, nor mule, nor tents,
> Fur he had left Texas afoot and cum
> To Georgy to see if he couldn't get sum
> Employment, and he was a lookin' as hum-
> Ble as if he had never owned any land.

The spelling of come as cum in the third line and some
as sum in the fourth are examples of an unusual use of
Eye Dialect. It seems probable that Lanier changed the
spelling in order that cum, sum and hum might be "perfect
rimes"--that is, that the vowels and final consonants
might be identical in appearance as well as in sound.
Cum appears again in the sixth stanza of another dialect-
poem, "Jones' Private Argument" and also in the third
stanza of "Them Ku Klux," but in four other dialect-
poems it is absent, with come being given its standard
spelling.

A clever use of Eye Dialect to form "perfect
rimes" occurs in "Them Ku Klux." The lines are as
follows:

> "I'll read you," says I, "but whur air my spex?
> I thought that I laid em right thar, jest nex
> To that newspaper: Nancy wher air my spex?"

Spex is Eye Dialect for specs, a shortened form of
spectacles which is good colloquial usage. Nex, though
at first glance it does not appear to be Eye Dialect,
actually is, for the usual pronunciation of next to is
[nɛkstə] and it can be seen that only one t is needed.
By changing the spelling of specs and by leaving the t out

of next, Lanier is able to make a "perfect rime." The
effectiveness of the device can be seen by comparison of
the difference in appearance of spex-nex and specs-next.

Sidney Lanier wrote only seven dialect-poems in
all. Five of them--"Thar's More in the Man Than Thar Is
in the Land," "Jones' Private Argument," "Civil Rights,"
"Them Ku Klux" and "9 from 8"--are attempts to represent
cracker dialect; the remaining two (which he wrote in
collaboration with his brother Clifford Lanier) are
attempts at Negro dialect. These two--"The Power of
Prayer" and "Uncle Jim's Baptist Revival Hymn" are quite
sparing in their use of Eye Dialect, particularly con-
sidering that roughly fifty per cent of the words in these
poems have nonstandard spellings. The word enough is
spelled enuff in a line from "The Power of Prayer" which
reads "De Debble's comin' round dat bend, he's comin'
shuh enuff." Lanier is only one of many writers who have
felt an urge to respell enough and have come up with an
Eye Dialect form. Probably he was only using a traditional
Eye Dialect spelling. This poem also uses the common Eye
Dialect spelling vittles for victuals. A more unusual
Eye Dialect spelling in the same poem is sence for sense.

An interesting nonstandard spelling occurs in both
"9 from 8" and "Uncle Jim's Baptist Revival Hymn." It is
the spelling fiel' lark for field lark. This appears to be
what A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English calls a
"junctional, or sandhi, form" in that it represents a

pronunciation resulting from the effect of the initial
sound of a following word. The PDAE does not record the
pronunciation of <u>field</u> <u>lark</u>, but it seems likely that
the final [d] of <u>field</u> is lost in a way similar to the
loss of final [d] in the <u>sand</u> of <u>sand pile</u> [sænpaɪl],
which it does record and comment on.

Kenyon's <u>American Pronunciation</u> has this to say
about these "junctional forms":

> The tendency to assimilation as a result of
> the various sound junctions that are made in daily
> speech is always present. . . . Our attitude toward
> assimilations must be determined by judgment, by
> observation of the actual habits of people who are
> accepted as speaking well, and by a desire to speak
> clearly without being artificial. Too much avoid-
> ance of the common assimilations of current good
> usage, such as the insistence on [mɪt ju], [dont ju],
> [netjur], [ɛdjukeʃən], instead of normal [mɪtʃu],
> [dontʃu], [netʃɚ], [ɛdʒukeʃən], is pedantic; while
> too liberal surrender to the tendency results in
> careless or slovenly utterance.[17]

Based on Kenyon's observations, the form <u>fiel' lark</u> would
appear to be in the "doubtful" category as far as being
Eye Dialect is concerned; it is obviously a representation
of a pronunciation which omits the [d] and which may or
may not be a standard pronunciation.

To mention some other Eye Dialect spellings in
the five cracker dialect-poems--and there are quite a few
of them in these poems--one may find the following in

---

[17]John Samuel Kenyon, <u>American Pronunciation</u>
(6th ed. rev.; Ann Arbor, George Wahr, publisher, 1935),
p. 75. I have indicated Kenyon's use of boldface type by
the use of square brackets.

"9 from 8": nuthin' for nothing, forrad for forehead,
werkin' for working (the loss of the final g is discussed
in Chapter III of this study), giv for give, and sum for
some. In "Thars More in the Man Than Thar Is in the Land"
there is found the common Eye Dialect spelling wimmen for
women. "Civil Rights" has bin for been though the same
word is given its standard spelling five lines earlier in
the poem. It appears that Lanier changes the spelling to
bin so that it will look like agin (again) as well as rime
with it. In "Jones' Private Argument" the word tare in
the line, "But tare up every I O U" is an Eye Dialect
spelling for tear.

Turning to Lanier's prose, the novel Tiger Lilies
makes considerable use of Eye Dialect in conveying the
speech of mountaineers and negroes. Cain Smallin, a
mountaineer of the Great Smokies, comes to the rescue of
his friends during a fight and makes the following state-
ment: "I was a right smart time a-comin', but when I did
come, I cum, by the livin'! Phe-e-e-w!"[18] The italics
of cum are Lanier's and this use of Eye Dialect is one not
encountered in any of the other authors examined. The
spellings come and cum are in the same sentence, but cum
is obviously used here as a more emphatic form of the word.
There is no indication of any pronunciation difference

[18]The Centennial Edition of the Works of Sidney
Lanier, V, 107.

represented in the two spellings, except that the Eye
Dialect form gets more emphasis. The use of Eye Dialect
here seems akin to the use of the exclamation point.

Another curious use of Eye Dialect occurs in Tiger
Lilies with the spelling of coffee as kauphy. Lanier
explains his use of kauphy in the following passage:

> . . . we, genuine coffee being invisible as any
> spirit during the war, made hideous images of it
> and paid our devotion to these morn, noon, and night.
> We made decoctions of pease, of potatoes, of pea-
> nuts, of meal, of corn, of okra . . . and called
> them kauphy.[19]

There is nothing in the nonstandard spelling of coffee
used here to indicate any change from the standard pronun-
ciation. The grapheme combination au represents [ɔ] in
such words as fault, laud, Paul, and haul; the grapheme
combination phy represents [fɪ] in such words as physics,
trophy, and philosophy. Thus kauphy is a suitable spelling
to represent the standard pronunciation [kɔfɪ]. The value
of the nonstandard form lies in its ability to emphasize
to the reader the artificiality of the beverage in question.
It also helps to express the contrast in the writer's
attitude toward being forced to drink kauphy and being
able to get a genuine cup of coffee.

In summary, it may be said that Lanier made
frequent use of Eye Dialect in five of his seven dialect
poems, and he also used it freely in Tiger Lilies. On

---

[19]Ibid., p. 149.

most occasions Eye Dialect is mixed in with Substandard
Dialect and Regional Dialect in his representation of the
speech of mountaineers, crackers, and negroes. There are
a number of cases, however, such as those mentioned above
in connection with "perfect rimes," and those connected
with cum used for emphasis and kauphy used to show lack
of genuineness, in which Lanier uses Eye Dialect cleverly
to obtain effects that would be difficult or impossible
to obtain without it.

Also belonging to the local color movement was
the "Hoosier Poet," James Whitcomb Riley. Riley wrote a
very large number of short poems with midwestern settings
about farmers, children, local characters, and old-timers.
His tone was one of "folksiness." Certainly he was one
of the most prolific users of Eye Dialect among American
poets. A recent study of five of Riley's dialect-poems[20]
revealed no less than thirty-three separate instances of
its use with a number of the Eye Dialect spellings having
been used on two or more occasions. The spelling ust to
for used to [justə] was in fact used eight times in the
five poems under consideration.

It is difficult to point to any specific purposes
in Riley's use of Eye Dialect. For the most part it appears

---

[20]Dale B. J. Randall, "Dialect in the Verse of
'The Hoosier Poet,'" American Speech, XXXV (1960), pp.
36-50.

that he uses it along with Regional Dialect and Substandard
Dialect to indicate that the people the poems are about
are "just good old folks like you and me." The dialect
of the poems is supposedly Indiana Hoosier dialect. How-
ever, Krapp has shown in an examination of one of Riley's
dialect-poems, "The Old Man and Jim" that it is "made up
of an abundance of ordinary colloquialisms, including
much eye dialect, with some archaisms of speech which
survive as low colloquialisms."[21]

A short passage from one of Riley's poems should
be sufficient to illustrate his inclusion of a number of
obvious Eye Dialect spellings among other nonstandard
spellings which he uses to produce his "folksy" effect.

Does the medder-lark complane, as he swims high and dry
Through the waves of the wind and the blue of the sky?
Does the quail set up and whissel in a disappointed way,
Er hang his head in silunce, and sorrow all the day?
Don't the buzzards ooze around up thare just like
    they've allus done?
Is they anything the matter with the rooster's lungs
    or voice?
Ort a mortul be complainin' when dumb animals rejoice?[22]

I have underlined the obvious cases of Eye Dialect. It is
interesting to note that complainin' and complane are both
found in the same stanza. Of course, the title of the
poem, "Discuraged," is itself Eye Dialect.

Leaving the local colorists, we now turn to the

---

[21]Krapp, The English Language in America, I, 245.

[22]James Whitcomb Riley, When the Frost Is on the
Punkin and Other Poems (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill
Co., 1911), p. 17.

use of Eye Dialect by Stephen Crane in his two well-known
naturalistic novels, Maggie, A Girl of the Streets and The
Red Badge of Courage. Maggie was Crane's first novel.
With reference to it one critic has said: "It was, I
believe, the first hint of naturalism in American letters.
It was not a best-seller; it offers no solution of life:
it is an episodic bit of slum fiction. . . ."[23]

The dialect used in Maggie is intended to represent
the nonstandard speech of a slum section of a large city.
Pete, the hero of the novel, if it can be said to have
one, has this to say on one occasion, "Dere was a mug
come in d'place d'odder day wid an idear he was goin' t'own
d'place."[24] Most of the dialect is of this type--Eye
Dialect is used sparingly and most of the spellings appear
to represent Substandard Dialect. Where Eye Dialect does
occur it is largely found in such spellings as t'own in
the quotation given above, which may be considered an Eye
Dialect spelling of to own [təon] in which the unstressed
to [tə] is represented by t'. However, even in the repre-
sentation of prepositions, pronouns, and conjunctions in
unstressed positions, Eye Dialect is used very little in
this first novel.

The same is not true, however, of The Red Badge of

---

[23]Vincent Starrett, Introduction to Maggie, A Girl
of the Streets, and Other Stories (New York: The Modern
Library, 1933), p. 15.

[24]Ibid., p. 271.

<u>Courage</u>. Crane is not concerned here with showing class
differences, nor is there any effort to show that his
soldiers come from a particular region of the United
States and speak the dialect of that region. The dialect-
spellings Crane uses appear to be, for the most part, an
attempt to convey the rough informality of the soldiers
in camp and in battle. There is no appreciable difference
in the speech of the generals and colonels and that of the
privates. In both cases Crane makes heavy use of Eye
Dialect to give the impression of informality. The
following passage is a typical one and may be used as an
example to show how he goes about creating the effect he
desires:

> Th' lieutenant, he ses: 'He's a jimhickey,' an'
> th' colonel, he ses: 'Ahem! he is, indeed a very
> good man t'have, ahem! He kep' th' flag 'way t'
> th' front. I saw 'im.'[25]

This quotation is supposed to represent the speech of one
of the soldiers, who is telling Henry Fleming of a
conversation he has overheard between the lieutenant and
the colonel. The most noticeable thing about the non-
standard spellings used is the replacing of various
vowels in unstressed positions with apostrophes. <u>The</u> in
unstressed position [ðə] is spelled <u>th'</u> four times, while
unstressed <u>to</u> [tə] is spelled <u>t'</u> twice. Also <u>and</u> and

---

[25]Stephen Crane, <u>The Red Badge of Courage</u>, ed.
Max J. Herzberg (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1926),
p. 207.

him are spelled an' and 'im, spellings that reflect a
standard pronunciation of these two words in unstressed
position-- [æn] and [ɪm]. It can be seen that Crane
relies most heavily on Eye Dialect forms which indicate
the effects of lack of stress on the pronunciation of
certain words in a sentence. The effect on the reader
is an impression of informality, without the definite
feeling of ignorance and crudity that the dialect in
Maggie produces. The soldiers and officers are, after
all, not being portrayed as slum characters but as men
in surroundings and under conditions that make more formal
language inappropriate.

Not all of Crane's Eye Dialect in The Red Badge
of Courage, however, is of the type just discussed. A
somewhat different type may be noted in the spelling kep'
for kept in the passage quoted. Here lack of stress is
not the factor involved. Instead it is the loss of the
final [t] due to the initial [ð] of the following word.
This is a loss that normally occurs in the standard
pronunciation of kept when certain consonants follow ([ð]
being one of them). Also Crane uses a number of common
Eye Dialect spellings such as licker for liquor,[26] sed
for said,[27] and minnit for minute.[28] The nonstandard

---

[26]Ibid., p. 9.

[27]Ibid., p. 48.

[28]Ibid., p. 137.

spelling ses for says is used frequently throughout the book wherever speech is being depicted. It is obviously Eye Dialect, though the more usual Eye Dialect spelling is sez.

Crane allows a number of inconsistencies to creep into his use of Eye Dialect. Henry Fleming uses both yestirday and yesterday on the same page.[29] And there would appear to be an unnecessary apostrophe or else an unnecessary letter in the spelling gota 'nough for got enough [gatǝnʌf].

The fact that some errors manage to creep in does not, however, make the dialect of The Red Badge of Courage difficult reading. Since the book relies heavily on one particular kind of Eye Dialect—the substitution of alternate spellings in places where the standard spelling doesn't take into account the effect of lack of stress— and uses relatively little Substandard Dialect, the reader soon becomes adjusted to nonstandard spellings and has little trouble deciphering them. They prove to be quite effective in conveying the impression of informality.

Leaving Crane, we now turn to some American novelists of the twentieth century. The use of Eye Dialect in the works of these writers cannot be classified under any single purpose, motive, or reason. Unlike its use by the frontier humorists and the local colorists, its use

---

[29]Ibid., p. 158.

by more recent novelists cannot be as easily categorized.
The purpose varies from writer to writer. In novels which
may be nearly devoid of any variety of dialect spellings,
Eye Dialect sometimes appears in a few places where least
expected and for any of a variety of reasons, for example
the use of lissen for listen used by Sinclair Lewis to
represent the speech of the booster poet-laureate, Chum
Frink, in the novel, Babbitt.[30] Frink has spoken standard
English throughout the novel. But toward the last Babbitt
happens upon Frink when the poet is drunk (for the first
time in the novel). The lissen tells the reader nothing
new about Frink's pronunciation, since it apparently
represents $\left[\text{lɪsn̩}\right]$, the standard and only pronunciation of
listen. But the Eye Dialect spelling indicates to the
reader that something is out of the ordinary, and he takes
the author's word for it that Frink is drunk--the Eye
Dialect form then helps reinforce the impression of awkward
or sloppy speech brought about by intoxication.

In Kingsblood Royal, another of Lewis' novels,
Dr. Kenneth Kingsblood, a speaker of standard English,
muses about the possibility that the Kingsblood family is
descended from royalty (a speculation that leads to the
discovery of the Negro blood in the family). He tells his
son Neil, "Maybe we're kings. No Joke. And not any of

    [30]Sinclair Lewis, Babbitt (New York: Harcourt,
Brace and Co., 1922), p. 272.

these French or German rulers either--Looeys and Ferdinands
and that lot, but real royal <u>British</u> kings."[31] The use of
the spelling <u>Looeys</u> for the plural of the French name
<u>Louis</u> appears to be Eye Dialect in that it represents the
usual English pronunciation of the name with the addition
of the regular <u>s</u> ending for the plural. Despite this fact,
however, the impression is given the reader through the
"incorrect" appearance of the Eye Dialect spelling that
Dr. Kenneth is a Midwestern hick incapable of the intri-
cacies of spelling or pronouncing French. This is, of
course, what Lewis wishes to indicate as the substance
of the passage eloquently attests.

On another occasion in the same novel, Lewis
writes of a group of small children at a birthday party.
The five-year-olds cluster around Neil Kingsblood and
chant, "Oh, Mister Capten Kingsblood--Oh, Mister Capten
Kingsblood!"[32] The only explanation for the use of
<u>capten</u> for <u>captain</u> would seem to be that it is intended
to represent the speech of children who wouldn't know how
to spell a "big word" like <u>captain</u>.   Actually the form
is simply Eye Dialect since it tells nothing about the
speech of the children that is in any way nonstandard.

Lewis on several occasions leaves out the spaces

---

[31]Sinclair Lewis, <u>Kingsblood Royal</u> (New York:
Random House, 1947), p. 38.

[32]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 83.

between words when he wishes to indicate generally sloppy
pronunciation, or when the words are closely related in
some common phrase. He has the "horrible daughter" of
Mr. Blingham, the assistant treasurer of the Flaver-Saver
Company, comment on the town of Grand Republic with "what
a silly name! Sounds like Fourthajuly. O, God, these
hicks!"[33] Now the point is that the daughter is a New
Yorker gazing in disdain at a map of the Middle West, but
the spelling Fourthajuly indicates nothing peculiar to
New York in her speech. It is an Eye Dialect form which
recognizes that in actual speech words aren't neatly
separated and that of in unstressed position is often [ə]
--a sound which may be better represented in conventional
spelling by the letter a than by any other letter except,
in a closed syllable, u. It is difficult to see why Lewis
would pick out this particular expression to misspell,
unless the fact that the three words taken together form
a frequently-used expression made him subconsciously feel
that they could be written together to indicate careless
pronunciation.

        Babbitt seems to have some such idea when he uses
the expression whaleuva for whale of a in one of his
promotional letters. The passage is as follows:

    Say, OLD MAN!
        I just want to know can I do you a whaleuva
    favor? Honest! No kidding! I know you're

---

[33]Ibid., p. 5.

> interested in . . . a love-nest for the wife and
> kiddies. . . .[34]

The choice of the particular spelling used is quite
likely due to analogy with a more common Eye Dialect form
helluva for hell of a. In fact, whale of a may have
originated as a minced form of hell of a.

Another twentieth-century American novelist who
has made sparing but sometimes interesting use of Eye
Dialect is William Faulkner. Considering the large number
of characters in his novels who speak either Substandard
Dialect or Regional Dialect, it is surprising that so
little Eye Dialect occurs. Faulkner's nonstandard spell-
ings nearly always are representative of nonstandard
pronunciations. It is true that he uses quasi-phonetic
spellings frequently in The Bear to represent the poor
spelling of Isaac McCaslin's ancestors as they occur in
the old ledger of their commissary store. But these spell-
ings are not intended to represent the speech of anyone.
A true example of Eye Dialect does occur in Faulkner's
short story "Wash." Wash, a "poor white" who has served
Colonel Sutpen for many years, always addresses the colonel
as "Kernel." The following is a sample of Wash's speech:
"Hyer I am, Kernel. You go back to sleep. We ain't whupped
yit, air we? Me and you kin do hit."[35] Most of the non-

---

[34]Lewis, Babbitt, p. 36.

[35]The Portable Faulkner, ed. Malcolm Cowley (New
York: The Viking Press, 1951), p. 175.

standard spellings in the quotation are Substandard
Dialect, but Kernel is Eye Dialect (as is kin if it is
intended to represent $[kən]$ or $[kŋ]$ which are standard
pronunciations of can in unstressed position). The Ne-
groes in the story say Cunnel when speaking or referring
to Sutpen. Faulkner, the narrator, uses the standard spell-
ing colonel in telling the story. It is interesting to
conjecture why Faulkner uses the Eye Dialect spelling. It
does help differentiate Wash from the Negroes and from
Sutpen himself. Though it is impossible to say for sure
what Faulkner had in mind, it seems likely that he expects
the reader to associate the spelling with the fact that
Wash is a "poor white." Having been told that Wash is a
member of that social class, the reader is ready to believe
that the Eye Dialect form is suitable for portraying the
speech of that class, whereas, in actuality it indicates
nothing phonetically except the standard pronunciation of
the word colonel--and does that better than the conventional
spelling.

Other examples of Eye Dialect in Faulkner are few
and far between. In "Ad Astra" he uses the spelling
lootenant for lieutenant, and if there is anything signifi-
cant about its use it would appear to be the fact that the
character using it is drunk.[36] In "Wash" he uses dawg for

---

[36]Ibid., p. 473.

$\underline{dog}^{37}$ and in "Delta Autumn" $\underline{coffee}$ is spelled $\underline{coffey}.^{38}$

A somewhat more frequent use of Eye Dialect occurs in John Steinbeck's $\underline{\text{The Grapes of Wrath}}$, but all of it is used in conjunction with Regional and Substandard Dialect in depicting the speech of the "Okies." The dropping of the final $\underline{d}$ in words like $\underline{sounds}$ [saʊnz] and $\underline{hands}$ [hænz] occurs often in the novel resulting in Eye Dialect spellings such as $\underline{soun's}^{39}$ and $\underline{han's}.^{40}$ The word $\underline{just}$ is usually spelled $\underline{jus'}$ throughout the novel. Sometimes this spelling results in Eye Dialect when the word which follows begins with [t] or [ð]. When Ma Joad says, "Jus' try to live the day, jus' the day," the loss of the $\underline{t}$ in $\underline{just}$ in both places is actually a more accurate phonetic transcription of the sounds as they would occur in colloquial speech on all levels than the retention of it would be, since a standard pronunciation of $\underline{just}$ $\underline{try}$ is [ʤʌstraɪ] and of $\underline{just}$ $\underline{the}$ is [ʤʌsðə]. Another spelling change used by Steinbeck which results in a number of Eye Dialect spellings is the substitution of some other letter for the letter representing [ə]. $\underline{Piano}$, for example, is spelled $\underline{piana};^{41}$ the final $\underline{o}$ in the standard spelling represents

---

$^{37}\underline{Ibid}.$, p. 178.

$^{38}\underline{Ibid}.$, p. 725.

^{39}John Steinbeck, $\underline{\text{The Grapes of Wrath}}$ (New York: The Modern Library, 1939), p. 194.

$^{40}\underline{Ibid}.$, p. 348.

$^{41}\underline{Ibid}.$, p. 39.

[ə] in a standard pronunciation of the word. Substitution of final a does not appear to change the pronunciation. Similarly the spelling of Christmas as Christmus[42] substitutes u for a in depicting the [ə] of the unstressed second syllable, but the Eye Dialect spelling still indicates the standard pronunciation [krɪsməs].

A peculiar aspect of the use of Eye Dialect occurs in its use in the drama. Since Eye Dialect forms represent standard pronunciations, it would appear that they would have no effect when heard rather than read. The sound that comes from the actor's mouth is not affected by the fact that his script may be full of Eye Dialect spellings. The audience hears [sɛz] whether the script spells it sez or says.

The fact remains, however, that a number of American playwrights of note do make use of Eye Dialect—— Eugene O'Neill, Tennessee Williams, and Arthur Miller, to name three of the best known. Actually there are several possible explanations for its use by dramatists. First, the dramatists using Eye Dialect are probably anticipating that their plays will be published in book form for readers. Second, the Eye Dialect spellings tell the actors and actresses something about what kind of character is intended by the playwright. Third, it is probably easier when conveying substandard speech or regional speech to

[42]Ibid., p. 41.

let Eye Dialect forms slip in by accident than it is to examine each nonstandard spelling to see if it represents a real departure from standard pronunciation. Whatever the reason, the drama is by no means lacking in Eye Dialect.

Eugene O'Neill, for example uses it in The Emperor Jones--the play, in fact, is entirely made up of dialect speakers of one sort or another. The two central figures are Brutus Jones, a colored ex-convict now acting as "Emperor" on a small West-Indian island, and Smithers, a cockney trader. O'Neill makes an effort to differentiate between the Negro dialect spoken by Jones and the Cockney dialect spoken by Smithers. The following is from one of Jones' speeches:

> It's playin' out my bluff. I has de silver bullet moulded and I tells 'em when de time comes I kills myself wid it. I tells 'em dats 'cause I'm de on'y man in de world big enuff to git me. (Scene I, p. 9)[43]

It can be seen that this dialect is a combination of a number of elements--errors in syntax such as "I has" and Substandard Dialect such as de for the and wid for with are prominent. Mixed in with these types we find some Eye Dialect. The use of enuff for enough is an obvious example. O'Neill uses this form repeatedly throughout the play, and is apparently unconscious that it is Eye Dialect.

---

[43]Eugene O'Neill, Nine Plays (New York: The Modern Library, 1932), p. 9. Scenes and page numbers refer to this volume throughout the discussion of O'Neill's use of Eye Dialect.

The passage quoted also has 'em in two places representing them in unstressed positions. This is Eye Dialect also, since a standard pronunciation of them in unstressed position is [ə m].

Also found in Jones' speech are a number of non-standard spellings representing combinations of words. A typical example occurs when Jones says "gimme my shovel" (Scene 4, p. 25). The spelling gimme for give me represents a pronunciation the PDAE calls a "junctional, or sandhi, form." The status of such forms has been discussed earlier (page 35), and the PDAE does not give a standard pronunciation for give me. This would appear to be one of those forms, however, that it is pedantic to avoid in normal educated conversation. Gimme accurately represents a frequent pronunciation in unstudied speech on all levels.

In conveying the dialect of his Cockney character, O'Neill uses a number of expressions like bloomin', bleedin', and bloody as well as dropping the initial h on most occasions. Here is one of Smithers' speeches (Scene 1, p. 17):

'E's got 'is bloomin' nerve with 'im, s'elp me!
Ho--the bleedin' nigger--puttin' on 'is bloody airs!
I 'opes they nabs 'im an' gives 'im what's what!

In this quotation the dropping of the h from his and him is an attempt to give the impression of nonstandard speech. Actually 'is and 'im as used above represent standard pronunciations of his and him when they occur in unstressed

position in a sentence--that is, $[\text{ɪ z}]$ and $[\text{ɪ m}]$. Throughout the play O'Neill drops h's when the only effect is the production of Eye Dialect.

On the whole O'Neill appears to have taken considerable care to see that his nonstandard spellings in The Emperor Jones are indicative of nonstandard speech. Except for the examples already mentioned, only one instance of Eye Dialect was found in the play, and that occurs when Jones says, "De moon's rizen" for "the moon's risen," in which the spelling rizen for risen is quite obviously Eye Dialect.

Turning to another of O'Neill's plays, Desire Under the Elms, in which the characters are New England farm people, we find that he no longer spells enough as enuff. Instead he has dropped the final f and spells it enuf.

O'Neill also makes extensive use of three favorites of Eye Dialect writers--likker for liquor, minit for minute, and vittles for victuals. One of the characters in the play, Cabot, says, "Ye've swilled my likker an' guzzled my vittles like hogs, haint ye?" (Part III, Scene I, p. 185) Another character, Peter, has the line, "Likker don't pear t'sot right." (Part II, Scene IV, p. 151) The Eye Dialect spelling likker is used by O'Neill even in one of his stage directions (Part III, Scene I, p. 184) when he writes, "Abbie turns to her left to a big stoutish middle-aged man whose flushed face and starting eyes show the amount of

'likker' he has consumed." It is difficult to say why
O'Neill would use the Eye Dialect spelling in a stage
direction, and enclose it in quotation marks, since there
is no indication that the liquor being served is not the
genuine article. Minute appears as minit in several
places--for example, when the character Eben says, "I
wish he'd die this minit." (Part III, Scene I, p. 185.)

Another interesting spelling which may be properly
classified as Eye Dialect is that used by Abbie for the
word friends. She says, "I want t' be frens with ye."
(Part I, Scene IV, p. 159) The PDAE does not list the
plural form friends, but it does comment on the fact that
it is not unusual in standard speech for $[d]$ to be omitted
between $[n]$ and $[z]$. Thus friends $[fr\epsilon nz]$ may be appro-
priately represented in Eye Dialect by Abbie's frens.

Mention should also be made of the frequent
spelling of forgive as fergive in the play. In one scene
the following dialogue occurs:

Eben. I love ye! Fergive me!
Abbie. I'd fergive ye all the sins in hell. . . .
(Part III, Scene IV, p. 202)

Since the standard pronunciation of forgive is given by
the PDAE as $[f\partial g\imath v]$, it would appear that the letter e
is at least as indicative of the "r-colored" vowel $[\partial^r]$ as
is the letter o of the standard spelling, and fergive
therefore may be considered Eye Dialect.

Actually O'Neill's most frequent use of Eye Dialect
occurs in his nonstandard spellings of certain short words

in unstressed positions in sentences. The following is
a speech of Eben's which illustrates this use: "I got
to pay fur my part o' the sin! An' I'd suffer wuss leavin'
ye . . . thinkin' o' ye day an' night, bein' out when yew
was in--'r bein' alive when yew was dead." (Part III,
Scene IV, p. 203) Among the nonstandard spellings which,
as far as anyone can tell, represent nothing more than
standard pronunciation of words in unstressed positions
are o' for of [ə], an' for and [æn], ye for you [jə] and
'r for or [ɚ]. The use of yew for you is particularly
interesting because it contrasts with the other spelling
ye in the same quotation. It appears that yew is also
Eye Dialect in that it is used when O'Neill intends a
stressed pronunciation of you--the context of the quotation
would appear to bear this out. Yew, if associated by the
reader with few, hew, etc., seems to represent [ju], the
standard pronunciation of you when stressed.

In commenting on O'Neill's use of Eye Dialect,
it may be pointed out that he has favorite forms which
he uses often--minit, likker, enuf, and enuff are among
them. With the exception of these, and his use of Eye
Dialect spellings of prepositions, conjunctions, and
articles in unstressed position, there are probably less
than a dozen Eye Dialect spellings in the two plays examined.
In regard to certain favorite forms, it is notable that he
uses them regardless of whether he is depicting the lan-
guage of a Cockney, a Negro, or a New England farmer.

Tennessee Williams makes considerable use of Eye
Dialect in his plays. It is often found mixed in with
Regional Dialect and Substandard Dialect, all three types
being used either to convey Southern speech or to indicate
the class and culture of the speaker. In Orpheus Descend-
ing Williams describes two of his characters, Dolly Hamma
and Beulah Binnings, as "wives of small planters . . .
tastefully overdressed in a somewhat bizarre fashion."[44]
The setting of the play is a small Southern town--from
the use of the place name Moon Lake, it is apparently a
town in the Mississippi delta. Beulah and Dolly's speech
is represented by nonstandard spellings such as wint for
went and nawth for north. These two spellings are genuine
Regional Dialect in that they represent pronunciation
peculiarities found in that section of the South. They
also use much Substandard Dialect. In addition, Williams
also sprinkles their speech with a number of Eye Dialect
spellings--facks for facts and dawg for dog, for example.
The PDAE records as an alternative standard pronunciation
$[fæ ks]$, which is what the spelling facks indicates.
Williams seems to be under the impression that dawg is a
particularly apt spelling for indicating Southern speech
because it appears in a number of his plays, for example
Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Sweet Bird of Youth and Baby Doll.

---

[44]Tennessee Williams, Orpheus Descending with
Battle of Angels (New York: New Directions Books, 1958),
p. 4.

Actually the substitution of aw for o does not necessarily indicate anything unusual in the pronunciation of the word, for aw represents [ɔ] in such words as law, saw, paw, raw, and others. The pronunciation [dɔg] is standard throughout the United States, and Williams merely is using an alternative Eye Dialect spelling which has not affected the pronunciation.[45]

Williams often has his characters use Goddam for God Damn. In fact, Lady, the principal female character of Orpheus Descending, uses both. Though it could be argued that the spelling Goddam stands for [gɑdæm] (since in many English words a double letter represents a single phoneme) while the standard spelling represents [gɑd dæm], there is no accounting for the dropping of the final "silent n" in the spelling except to say that in this respect Williams' form is Eye Dialect. Taboo may be involved in connection with this word--it is possible that to Williams Goddam looks less profane.

Some of the Eye Dialect in Orpheus Descending consists of quasi-phonetic spellings representing standard pronunciations of words in unstressed positions. Dolly Hamma asks, "Who's the young man with yuh?"[46] The yuh appears to stand for [jə] which is the standard pronun-

_____

[45]For another possible interpretation of dawg see the footnote on page 82.

[46]Williams, p. 18.

ciation of you in unstressed position. Sheriff Talbott in
the same play says, "Git on down off th' counter, I ain't
gonna touch y'r guitar."[47] The apostrophes in th' and
y'r apparently represent the [ə] of [ðə] and the [ɚ] of
[jɚ] respectively, and both [ðə] and [jɚ] are standard
pronunciations of the and your in unstressed position
throughout the United States. For Sheriff Talbott to have
given the and your the pronunciations [ði] and [jʊr] in
unstressed position would have indeed been nonstandard
and could only have indicated a misguided attempt at
correctness on the part of the character. The Sheriff is
not concerned with correctness and the forms th' and y'r
are simply Eye Dialect. By an appeal to the eye only,
Williams has made most readers think that the Sheriff
speaks in a careless way.

It is interesting to note that only for the lower
class characters in Orpheus Descending does Williams use
Eye Dialect. The representatives of the old family of the
town, Carol Cutrere and her brother, use no dialect of
any sort. The same is generally true in A Streetcar Named
Desire. Stanley Kowalski and his friends use all three
types of dialect--their speech is represented by non-
standard spellings that are representative of regional
pronunciations, substandard pronunciations, and standard
pronunciations. The Dubois sisters, Blanche and Stella,

---

[47]Ibid., p. 96.

probably because of their more genteel background and upbringing are represented as speakers of Standard English. There are a few nonstandard spellings used in depicting their speech, but these are the exception. Blanche, for example, says <u>awf'ly</u> <u>good</u> and <u>awf'ly</u> <u>scared</u>--Williams replacing the <u>u</u> and one of the <u>l</u>'s with an apostrophe. This is perhaps intended to represent a peculiarity of "genteel" Southern speech, but, in reality, it represents only what is a standard pronunciation of <u>awfully</u> in all parts of the country, namely $[\text{ɔflɪ}]$.

Of Williams' plays, one of the most prolific in Eye Dialect is <u>Baby</u> <u>Doll</u>. Baby Doll herself is a Southerner, and though she is of somewhat limited education, she is not without a good deal of native intelligence. She speaks the regional dialect of the South, or at least it appears that Williams seeks to give that impression. She talks about wearing "clo'se skintight" and on one occasion tells Vaccaro, the man she is interested in, "You're natcherally dark." Also to Vaccaro she says, "Oh, you're playing showfer! Showfers sit in the front seat." Baby Doll's husband, Archie, talks about "long-standing bus'ness associates" and the Negro Morse addresses Archie as "Capt'n." The point is that such quasi-phonetic spellings as <u>clo'se</u> for <u>clothes</u>, <u>natcherally</u> for <u>naturally</u>, <u>showfer</u> for <u>chauffeur</u>, <u>bus'ness</u> for <u>business</u> and <u>Capt'n</u> for <u>captain</u> are actually Eye Dialect and show nothing distinctively Southern in the speech of the characters. In addition to

the examples given, Williams often makes use of the
apostrophe to represent the [ə] that occurs in many words
in unstressed position. He has Baby Doll say y'know for
you know, and, in the lines "Keep y'r hands off me! Will
yuh?" she uses y'r for your and yuh for you. Y'know,
y'r, and yuh are all Eye Dialect forms. (Yuh doesn't
make use of the apostrophe, but it gives the impression
of the pronunciation [jə].)

        In The Rose Tattoo Williams is dealing with a
group of Sicilian-Americans. Serafina Delle Rose, the
central character in the play, often mixes Italian with
her English as in the following passage:

> Teacher! Teacher! senti! What you think you
> want to do at this high school? Sentite! per
> favore! You give this dance! What kind of a
> spring dance is it? Answer this question, please,
> for me . . . She meet this boy there who don't
> even go to no high school.[48]

Williams mixes English and Italian extensively to depict
the speech of the Sicilian-Americans as well as making
some changes in the syntax of the sentences spoken. There
are only a few instances of Eye Dialect. However, one
instance is particularly notable. Serafina on several
occasions in normal conversation uses the word women. When
she is angry or disgusted on the other hand, she uses the
word winmen as in the following passages:

---

[48]Tennessee Williams, The Rose Tattoo in Best
American Plays, Fourth Series, ed. by John Gassner (New
York, Crown Publishers, Inc., 1958), p. 101.

> I told you wimmen that you was not in a honky-
> tonk! Now take your blouse and git out! Get out
> on the streets where you kind a wimmen belong.[49]

> What all of 'em are hunting? To have a good time,
> and the Devil cares who pays for it? I'm sick of
> men, I'm almost as sick of men as I am of wimmen.[50]

Williams is using a very common Eye Dialect spelling in
substituting wimmen for women. Although it is impossible
to be sure of his reason for making the substitution, it
does seem significant that wimmen is only used in a
derogatory context, while women is used in other contexts.

To summarize Williams' use of Eye Dialect it may
be said that it appears for the most part mixed in with
Regional Dialect and Substandard Dialect. Characters of
the lower-middle and lower classes use most of it; the
well-educated or gently-bred Southerners use very little,
though these do not use very much Regional Dialect or
Substandard Dialect either. Quite a bit of Williams'
Eye Dialect may well occur by accident, for often the
quasi-phonetic spellings serve no special purpose not
served by spellings which represent actual pronunciation
differences.

In Arthur Miller's _Death of a Salesman_ most of
the nonstandard spellings are either Eye Dialect or Non-
standard Dialect. There has been no effort, apparently,
to give a regional flavor to the speech of the characters.

---

[49]_Ibid._, p. 103.

[50]_Ibid._, p. 108.

Woolcott Gibbs has said of Miller, "No writer in the theatre understands better how to combine the poverty-stricken imagery, the broken rhythms and mindless repetitions, and the interminable cliches of illiterate speech into something that has a certain harsh and grotesque eloquence."[51] Many of the nonstandard spellings undoubtedly represent "illiterate speech" and may be classified as Substandard Dialect, but it is often difficult to separate these spellings from Eye Dialect spellings in Miller's writing. He uses, on occasion, <u>lemme</u> for <u>let me</u>, <u>gonna</u> for <u>going to</u>, <u>whatta ya</u> for <u>what have you</u>, and <u>wanna</u> for <u>want to</u>. Such spellings indicate how words in proximity to each other may affect each other through assimilation of sounds, reduction of consonant clusters, syncopation, etc. The fact is that we do not, in normal connected speech, give each word the pronunciation that we would give it if it were encountered alone instead of in the vicinity of other words. When we speak we do not say a series of discrete words--there is no artificial break between words. Instead we speak in a continuous stream and the sounds of one word often affect the sounds of the word which precedes it or the word which follows it.

Actually there is no dictionary we may consult on the status as standard or nonstandard of the many

[51]Woolcott Gibbs, Review of <u>A View From the Bridge</u>, by Arthur Miller, <u>New Yorker</u> (October 8, 1955), p. 88.

pronunciations often heard in ordinary speech which reflect this effect of words on each other. The quotation previously given (page 35) from Kenyon's American Pronunciation in regard to the status of these pronunciations is applicable also to the pronunciations represented by the nonstandard spellings of Miller's given above.

Miller, like many other writers, uses some non-standard spellings to indicate the pronunciation of certain words in unstressed position in the sentence. He often writes y' for you in such expressions as y'understand, y'know and y'see. The same word is spelled ya at other times as, for example, in "I wanna see ya" or "Whatta ya got, Dad?" Both the y' and the ya appear to be attempts to represent [jə], the standard pronunciation of you unstressed, and may be considered Eye Dialect. Interestingly enough, there is little consistency in the substitution of ya or y' for you, except that ya naturally is used where the last word in the sentence is being represented. Often the standard spelling you is used in unstressed position within a few lines of a place where the Eye Dialect spelling is used.

Not all the characters in Death of a Salesman have speeches which contain nonstandard spellings. The lines spoken by Linda, Willie Loman's wife, are free of nonstandard spellings as are those spoken by Ben, Willie's older brother. Willie and his two sons, Biff and Happy, are credited with most of the supposed but not actually

nonstandard pronunciations represented by the Eye Dialect spellings previously mentioned. The effect of using lemme, gotta, gonna and similar spellings, along with the Eye Dialect spellings of certain words in unstressed position, is to give an air of informality bordering on sloppiness to the speech of the three. Willie and his boys want to be informal. They want to be "good guys" and Willie is continually pointing out the value of being "well liked." The use of Eye Dialect helps create an impression of a way of speaking that seems appropriate to this outlook. It is an impression of informality and ease with an absence of such qualities as artificiality, dignity or intellect.

In the presence of Ben--who is a symbol of success to him--Willie uses no Eye Dialect and very little Substandard Dialect. Willie admires Ben and is careful and serious in the things he says to him. Ben is a stiff person and Willie can't be really easy with him. The sloppy familiarity of his conversations with Biff and Happy is missing when he talks to Ben, and so is the Eye Dialect.

CHAPTER III

EYE DIALECT AS A PROBLEM IN GRAPHICS

The production of Eye Dialect forms poses a problem in graphics. Certain of the symbols available in our writing system must be selected and arranged in a particular order to produce the desired effect on both eye and ear. However, it should be understood here that many writers of Eye Dialect are not aware of the problem at all. They are often under the impression that they are actually indicating nonstandard pronunciations when in reality the spellings they use are Eye Dialect.

Some writers probably use distorted spellings without regard to the pronunciations they represent simply because such spellings are a traditional way of portraying the speech of a dialect character. This haphazard use of distorted spellings inevitably produces some Eye Dialect forms. Still others may intend to convey the impression that "This is the way the speaker would spell the word if he had to write it." In the discussion which follows it has been assumed, for convenience, that the writer is consciously and purposely using Eye Dialect. However, whether or not he is aware that he is using it, the same considerations involving the arranging of graphic symbols

to indicate a standard or **exclusive** pronunciation--that
is, the problem in graphics--still **exist**.

The problem in graphics is the same for the
writer of Eye Dialect as it is for the writer of Sub-
standard Dialect or Regional Dialect **except** for one
important point. The writer of Eye Dialect combines
graphemes to indicate a standard or exclusive pronunciation,
while the other combines graphemes to indicate an actual,
existing, nonstandard pronunciation. The writer of **Eye**
Dialect need not have made a study of peculiarities of
regional (or national) nonstandard speech. He merely uses
an alternative nonstandard spelling of a word that will
yet indicate its standard pronunciation. (He is not,
however, looking for alternative standard spellings that
exist in English in a few cases, such as catalog and
catalogue.)

The inexact "fit" of English makes this task
possible, and in many cases relatively easy. There is an
exceedingly inexact correspondence between the phonemes
and graphemes of English. Before discussing our writing
system, however, let us first consider an important
requirement which would complicate the deliberate writing
of Eye Dialect (or of any other kind of dialect, for that
matter). The requirement is that the reader must be able
to associate the unfamiliar Eye Dialect spelling with the
standard spelling. The Eye Dialect spelling means nothing
to him unless he can recognize what word or words it is

intended to represent.

In the process of associating a dialect form with its standard form (and thus understanding its meaning), three factors are involved: (1) context, (2) similarity of appearance, and (3) similarity of pronunciation. Let us consider each of these factors using the nonstandard spelling wuz for the word was. This nonstandard spelling is Eye Dialect since it may represent the pronunciation of was which all speakers use in unstressed position--that is, [wəz]--and it also may represent the pronunciation which a good many speakers of standard English use in stressed position--that is, [wʌz].

The first of the three factors, context, refers to the fact that the reader has been led to expect a certain word by the written matter which preceded and followed it. It may be that in the context of the matter being read, the word was "makes sense" at the particular point where the nonstandard written form wuz occurs. This in itself would provide a hint to the reader as to what standard spelling the nonstandard form was intended to represent.

However, context is only one of the considerations involved. It can easily be seen that the similarity of appearance of the two words on the printed page has something to do with the matter of association--that is, wuz and was look very much alike. For one thing they have the same number of letters, and perhaps equally important they

both begin with the letter w. If similarity of appearance were not of importance, and context alone provided a sufficient hint to the reader, then some such combination of letters as jrstvx might just as well be used to represent was as the combination wuz. In actuality, however, the sudden appearance of jrstvx would be highly confusing to the reader, and it is thus evident that similarity of appearance is another important consideration in the association of a dialect spelling with its standard spelling.

There is a third important consideration, moreover, that must be added to context and similarity of appearance. If these two were the sole determining factors of whether the reader could decipher the nonstandard spelling, the author might as well represent was by the spelling wkz as the spelling wuz. From the standpoint of context and similarity of appearance there is no apparent advantage in the use of one over the other. There is an advantage in using wuz from the standpoint of pronunciation, however. In the English writing system, the letter u frequently represents the sound [ə]. The letter k on the other hand, never represents this sound. Since [ə] is the vowel sound in a standard pronunciation of was, the use of u is pref-erable to the use of k on phonological grounds.

In the writing of Eye Dialect, therefore, the writer is concerned with the factors mentioned above. There is very little he needs to worry about in connection with

context. Ordinarily, regardless of which word or words he chooses to spell in a nonstandard manner, the sentence structure and the "sense" of the words preceding and following the chosen words will give the reader some hint as to what standard spellings will "make sense" when substituted for the nonstandard ones. However, in many cases, the hint received from context is not enough for the reader. Often there are points in a literary passage where more than one word will "make sense."

Similarity of appearance is probably as important as context. As G. B. Shaw is supposed to have pointed out, the word _fish_ may be represented by _ghoti_ if one interprets the _gh_ as representing the final sound of _tough_, the _o_ as the stressed vowel of _women_, and the _ti_ as the medial consonant of _nation_. But the use of _ghoti_ for _fish_ would be quite misleading to the reader because of its lack of similarity of appearance.

Something similar may be said of the importance of similarity of pronunciation. In Eye Dialect, by definition, the pronunciation of the standard and the nonstandard written forms must be the same. But in the many cases where a large number of variant spellings represent the same phoneme in English, how does the dialect writer choose the most appropriate spelling?

Now returning to the writing system of English, it is necessary to consider the correspondence between the phonemes of the English phonological system and the

graphemes of the English writing system. According to one
analysis, there are thirty-eight segmental phonemes in
English consisting of twenty-four consonants and fourteen
vowels.[1] In addition there are four stress phonemes, four
pitch phonemes and four juncture phonemes. Thus the total
number of phonemes, segmental and suprasegmental, adds up
to fifty.

In order for there to be a true one-to-one relation-
ship between phonemes and graphemes there must be a separate
grapheme to represent each phoneme. Each grapheme must
always represent only one and the same phoneme, and
conversely, each phoneme must always be represented by
only one and the same grapheme. But there are fifty phonemes
and only forty-one graphemes.[2] Obviously there cannot be a
one-to-one relationship between phoneme and grapheme.
After examining the correspondence between phoneme and

----

[1]This analysis of the segmental phonemes of English
is based on Robertson and Cassidy, The Development of
Modern English, pp. 56-75. Some of the symbols used to
represent phonemes have been changed, however. The complete
list of segmental phonemes is as follows:

consonants
    stops /b d g p t k/
    spirants /v ð z ž f θ s š h/
    nasals / m n ŋ /
    lateral /l/
    glides /r j w/
    affricates /ǰ č/
vowels
    /æ e i ɑ o u ɪ ɛ ʊ ɔ ə ʌ ɚ ɝ/

[2]The graphemic analysis is that of pp. 436-437 of
W. Nelson Francis, The Structure of American English.
According to this analysis the graphemes of English are:
    Segmentals: (1) Twenty-six letters of the

grapheme in each individual case, W. Nelson Francis con-
cludes, ". . . there is not even one single example of a
one-to-one correspondence between phoneme and grapheme in
the whole system."[3]

The writer of Eye Dialect is able to use this
lack of one-to-one correspondence between phoneme and
grapheme to find the alternative spellings he needs. His
task actually is twofold: (1) recognizing those places
at which the "fit" is inexact, and (2) manufacturing an
alternative spelling which will be satisfactory from the
standpoint of context, similarity of appearance, and
similarity of pronunciation. The remainder of this chapter
will be devoted to showing various ways in which Eye
Dialect writers have attempted to accomplish these two
tasks.

Recognition of inexact "fit".--As has previously
been pointed out, there are many ways in which the "fit"
of the written and spoken languages is inexact--that is,
places where discrepancies exist in the ideal one-to-one
relationship of phoneme and grapheme. The following is a

<pre>
                        alphabet: a b c . . . z
                (2) Eleven marks of punctuation:
                    , ; : . ? ! ' - -- " (
                (3) Space
      Suprasegmentals:
                (1) capitalization
                (2) italics
                (3) small caps
                (4) lower case
</pre>

[3]Ibid., p. 449.

list of eight of the discrepancies which appear to have
been most productive of Eye Dialect--in fact, it may be
that the list covers all of the discrepancies which have
been used by writers of Eye Dialect. It covers all cases
found in the present study, but it would be presuming too
much to assume that there are not others, considering
that it has only been possible to examine a relatively
small portion of all the mass of written matter in which
Eye Dialect might be found. The list is as follows:

1. Single graphemes are used to represent com-
binations of phonemes.

2. Combinations of graphemes are used to represent
single phonemes.

3. Doubled consonantal graphemes are used to
represent not two phonemes but one.

4. Single phonemes are represented by several
different graphemes or combinations of graphemes.

5. Graphemic combinations from writing systems
other than English have been taken into the language
unchanged.

6. Graphemic combinations do not take into
account change of pronunciation due to change in stress.

7. Graphemic combinations do not allow for the
effect of adjacent words on pronunciation.

8. Graphemic combinations do not take into account
the fact that speech is a continuous stream.

The first of these discrepancies, single graphemes

being used to represent combinations of phonemes, may be
illustrated by the spelling once for /wʌns/. The phoneme
combination /wʌ/ at the beginning of the word is repre-
sented by the single grapheme o. Edward Eggleston replaces
the single grapheme o by the double grapheme wu in his
spelling wunst.[4] This spelling cannot be regarded as
wholly Eye Dialect since the t on the end of the word
indicates a nonstandard pronunciation. However, the use
of wu at the start of the word illustrates the way in
which a writer of dialect may sense the lack of a one-to-
one relationship between phoneme and grapheme and make use
of this lack. An Eye Dialect form which makes use of the
same discrepancy is G. W. Harris' wun for one.

The number of words in English in which a phonemic
sequence is represented by a single grapheme appears to
be somewhat limited. In addition to once, others in which
this discrepancy appears are words like six in which the
phoneme combination /ks/ is represented by the single
grapheme x, and words like exist in which the phoneme
combination /gz/ is represented by the single grapheme x.
No examples, however, were found in this study of Eye
Dialect spellings for exist, six, or words similar to them.

---

[4]Because of the large number of Eye Dialect
spellings it has been necessary to cite as examples in the
remainder of this chapter, it has not seemed feasible to
footnote each form. Instead a list of all forms used,
arranged alphabetically and giving source, has been
appended to the end of the chapter.

The Eye Dialect forms based on <u>one</u> and <u>once</u> were the only representatives found which take advantage of the first discrepancy.

The second of the discrepancies listed above, the use of combinations of graphemes to represent single phonemes, has been more productive of Eye Dialect forms than the first. A good example of this discrepancy is in the spelling <u>clothes</u> to represent the alternative standard pronunciation /kloz/.[5] George Washington Harris and Charles F. Browne use <u>close</u> as an alternate spelling and Lowell in <u>The Biglow Papers</u> spells it <u>clo'es</u>. Tennessee Williams' <u>Baby Doll</u> has the spelling <u>clo'se</u>.

The basic discrepancy noted by the various writers, either consciously or unconsciously, is the fact that in this particular word the graphemic sequence <u>thes</u> represents only one phoneme, /z/. The alternate spellings take advantage of the lack of a one-to-one relationship between the graphemes and phoneme to offer other ways of representing the phoneme /z/.

A common use of more than one grapheme to represent a single phoneme occurs in the spelling of certain vowel phonemes. One of the spellings of /e/ is <u>ea</u> as in <u>great</u> and <u>break</u>. In words like <u>feather</u> and <u>death</u> the grapheme combination <u>ea</u> represents the single phoneme /ɛ/. In

---

[5]/kloðz/ is also frequently heard in Standard English.

another case ea stands for /ɑ/ as in heart. Writers of
Eye Dialect have often produced alternate spellings which
use only one grapheme. Such a spelling is the use of
grate for great.[6] This is a reduction in the number of
graphemes used to represent /e/, not counting the final
"silent e." Other similar spellings found in this study
are deth for death, fether for feather, and harts for
hearts.

There are many examples of other vowel phonemes
which are represented by more than one grapheme. In the
word said, for example, the phoneme /ɛ/ is represented by
the grapheme combination ai. This is a relatively rare
way of representing this phoneme, and writers of Eye
Dialect have often substituted another spelling. Stephen
Crane in The Red Badge of Courage uses sed, for example.
The word says /sɛz/ is another example of the use of a
relatively unusual graphemic combination to represent a
single phoneme. The ay stands for the phoneme /ɛ/. Many
writers of Eye Dialect have seen fit to change the spell-
ing to sez, while others achieve the same reduction in
graphemes when they represent says by the form ses.

In the word been a combination of graphemes ee
represents the single phoneme /ɪ/. The Eye Dialect
spelling bin is frequently encountered--a spelling which

─────────

[6]E.g. by Lowell and Browne among others.

reduces the number of graphemes by one. In a less usual case the ee grapheme combination is reduced to the grapheme y in the spelling coffy for coffee, a spelling used by William Faulkner in his short story, "Delta Autumn." James Whitcomb Riley recognizes the lack of one-to-one relationship between phoneme and grapheme in the last syllable of Sunday /sʌndɪ/ and changes the spelling to Sund'y in his poem, "Wet Weather Folks." (Here, in a sense, there has been no reduction in the number of graphemes, since the apostrophe itself is a grapheme.) The /u/ of boots is spelled with a single grapheme, u (with "silent e"), by Bret Harte when he uses the form butes in his short story, "How Santa Claus Came to Simpson's Bar." This spelling is, however, an unfortunate one if intended as Eye Dialect, for it suggests, instead of /buts/, the /bjuts/ of attributes.

In English orthography single consonant phonemes are often represented by grapheme combinations also. In the word enough the phoneme /f/ is represented by the grapheme combination gh. Eugene O'Neill, as we have seen, replaces the gh by f (and also replaces the grapheme combination ou representing /ʌ/ by u) in his spelling enuf, which is found in Desire Under the Elms. Robert Penn Warren in "Billie Potts" spells laugh with the form laff, which though a simplification still uses two graphemes for a single consonant phoneme. In numb /nʌm/ the final phoneme is represented by mb in the standard

spelling. G. W. Harris uses the Eye Dialect spelling <u>num</u>.
The word <u>handsome</u> /hænsəm/ is spelled <u>han'some</u> by
Edward Eggleston, thus getting rid of the <u>d</u> which is not
normally pronounced in either standard or nonstandard
natural speech. Booth Tarkington writes <u>dam'</u> for <u>damn</u>
/dæm/ to eliminate the "silent <u>n</u>."[7] Other Eye Dialect
spellings which depend on the discrepancy of the single
phoneme being represented by a grapheme combination are
James Whitcomb Riley's <u>ha'f-way</u> for <u>half-way</u> /hæfwe/ and
<u>mor'gage</u> for <u>mortgage</u> /mɔrgɪǰ/, in which, however, the
apostrophe--itself a grapheme--substitutes for the
grapheme felt to be unnecessary, Tennessee Williams'
<u>ha'f</u> for <u>half</u> /hæf/, and G. W. Harris' <u>secons</u> for <u>seconds</u>
/sɛkənz/ and <u>tords</u> for <u>towards</u> /tordz/ (or /tɔrdz/).

A special case of the representing of a single
phoneme by a grapheme combination is that connected with
words ending with <u>ing</u>. One of the commonest devices of
the dialect writer is to leave off the final <u>g</u> or else to
replace it with an apostrophe. The question arises as to
whether these forms without the <u>g</u> should be considered
Eye Dialect at all. The <u>Pronouncing Dictionary of American
English</u> says that the pronunciation of <u>ing</u> as /ɪn/, /ən/
and /n̩/ is "occasionally heard in the informal speech of

---

[7]In the case of <u>dam'</u> for <u>damn</u>, the changed spelling
may be a concession to those readers who would look upon
the standard spelling as taboo. Similarly the spelling
<u>goddam</u> for <u>god damn</u> would appear to be a concession of the
same type. See above, p. 57.

the cultivated in all parts of the United States and
Canada . . . "(p. 224). In England, the landed gentry
are sometimes called the "huntin', shootin', fishin' set."
"Dropping the g" is now somewhat old-fashioned in British
English, but perfectly standard. Thus the spellings which
leave off the g are Eye Dialect in the sense defined here,
in that they represent a pronunciation that may be consid-
ered standard throughout the English-speaking world. For
those persons who normally have final /n/ in words ending
in an unstressed ing, the standard spelling with g would
constitute another case of a single phoneme /n/ being
represented by a grapheme combination ng.

Generally speaking, final /n/ in plurisyllabic
words with final ing is associated with the Regional
Dialect of the South--though such is certainly not the
case when Arthur Miller has non-Southern characters use
tellin' for telling and knockin' for knocking in Death of
a Salesman. According to A Pronouncing Dictionary of
American English the /n/ is more prevalent in the South,
but (see previous quote) that it is by no means confined
to that area.

The third discrepancy in the list is actually a
special case of the second. Here, also, combinations of
graphemes represent single phonemes. This third discrep-
ancy, however, is distinguished by the fact that the
grapheme combinations always consist of doubled consonants.
In English it is seldom that a doubled consonant actually

represents a doubled phoneme such as the doubled /n/ in unnamed /ʌn+'nemd/. As a general rule the doubled consonant represents a single phoneme as in dinner /dɪnəɾ/. In addition, it may indicate something about the pronunciation of a nearby grapheme as, for example, in diner, where the i grapheme differs in pronunciation from the i in dinner, with its doubled consonant. For the purposes of the writer of Eye Dialect, it is of primary importance that single consonant phonemes are often represented by doubled consonantal graphemes. He can use this fact in two ways: (1) he can usually double a consonant that is single in a standard spelling without indicating a change in the pronunciation of the word, (2) he can usually omit one of the doubled consonants in a standard spelling without indicating a change in the pronunciation of the word.

The word minute, with its Eye Dialect spellings minnit and minit, is a good illustration of the flexibility this discrepancy allows. One of the Eye Dialect forms has the doubled n while the other does not, yet they indicate the same pronunciation. The same comparison may be made in regard to two Eye Dialect spellings of women which were found in this study--wimmen and wimin.

Stephen Crane furnishes an example of dropping one of the doubled consonants of the standard spelling. In writing an Eye Dialect spelling of the phrase "hell of a" in The Red Badge of Courage, he uses heluva (with its

single <u>l</u>).[8] By comparison, to convey the same phrase
Tennessee Williams uses <u>helluva</u> (with its doubled conso-
nant). Eggleston in spelling <u>apostle</u> uses two <u>p</u>'s--<u>apposil</u>.
Sinclair Lewis in his Eye Dialect spelling of <u>society</u>
uses the doubled <u>s</u> to represent a single phoneme and
produces <u>sassiety</u>. His spelling of <u>listen</u> does the same
in that it substitutes another <u>s</u> for the <u>t</u> producing
<u>lissen</u>.

The fourth discrepancy in the representation of
phonemes by graphemes, as listed previously, is the fact
that single phonemes are represented by several <u>different</u>
graphemes or combinations of graphemes. This discrepancy
probably accounts for more Eye Dialect than any of the
other discrepancies, for it allows the writer to change
the spelling of a word without indicating a change in
pronunciation simply by substituting one grapheme for
another. For example, the phoneme /k/ in English is
represented by both <u>c</u> (cool, cut, can) and <u>k</u> (Kate, kite,
kit). Eye Dialect writers have used this discrepancy in
producing forms which substitute <u>k</u> or <u>kk</u> where the stand-
ard spelling calls for <u>c</u> or <u>cc</u>. Hooper, for example, in
his "Captain Simon Suggs" tales, writes <u>kleen</u> for <u>clean</u>
and <u>tobakker</u> for <u>tobacco</u>.

Among the most frequently encountered Eye Dialect

---

[8]Taboo may be involved here (cf. footnote 7).
<u>Heluva</u> probably looks less profane than <u>hell</u> <u>of</u> <u>a</u> and may
be a concession to squeamish readers.

spellings are those which take the place of the standard
spelling of women /wɪmɪn/ and minute /mɪnɪt/. The repre-
sentation of the first /ɪ/ phoneme in the former by the
letter o, and the representation of the second /ɪ/ phoneme
of the latter by the letter u, are unusual in English, and
dialect writers have taken advantage of this fact. The
usual Eye Dialect spellings of women are wimmen, wimmin
and wimin. Minit and minnit are frequently encountered
Eye Dialect spellings of minute.

Often one combination of graphemes may be sub-
stituted for another combination without indicating a
change in pronunciation. The phoneme /š/ is represented
by a number of grapheme combinations--sh as in ship, ti as
in nation, and ci as in special are among them. In Eye
Dialect sh is sometimes substituted for ci and ti. Eugene
O'Neill in Mourning Becomes Electra uses speshully for
specially. Charles F. Browne writes conversashun for
conversation. The phoneme /č/ is also represented by
various combinations of graphemes--t as in nature and ch
as in check are two of them. We find Eye Dialect writers
substituting ch for t to make words like Tennessee Williams'
natcherally for naturally and Sidney Howard's spirichool
for spiritual. The phoneme /k/ is in a number of words
represented by the grapheme combination ct. One writer,
Tennessee Williams, has substituted the grapheme ck to form
an Eye Dialect spelling facks for facts (which has alter-
nate standard pronunciations, /fækts/ and /fæks/); a

similar substitution is noted in the Al Capp comic strip, Li'l Abner, when the predickshuns of Ol' Man Mose are referred to.

In general it may be said that substitution of one grapheme for another without indicating a change in pronunciation is apt to occur any time the creator of a folk character senses that the grapheme in the standard spelling is not the most common way of representing the particular phoneme. It is not difficult to see why it would occur to Faulkner to spell Arkansas as Arkansaw considering that it is the sole example of the use of as to represent /ɔ/ in English. It is not as easy to see why both Faulkner and Tennessee Williams on occasion decided to spell dog as dawg, since the grapheme o quite often represents /ɔ/ in English, and the pronunciation /dɔg/ is the one heard most frequently throughout the United States.[9] Faulkner also spells naked as nekkid on one occasion. This is perhaps not Eye Dialect; however, A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English calls the pronunciation /nɛkɪd/--which nekkid would appear to represent--"old fashioned," but not necessarily nonstandard. The same writer in his short story "Wash" uses the spelling kernel for colonel, and

_____

[9]One possible reason for this spelling is that the writers are attempting to indicate the pronunciation /dɔʊg/. This diphthong occurs in Southern regional speech on occasion in words like dog, log and water. The spelling dawg is not a very apt way of indicating this, however, since it suggests words like saw and law, whose usual pronunciations are /sɔ/ and /lɔ/.

this too seems like a logical place to substitute graphemes, since this representation of /kər/ by <u>colo</u> is unique in the language.

Sometimes in the substitution of graphemes by Eye Dialect writers, a combination takes the place of a single grapheme. Such is the case when Jesse Stuart spells <u>neck</u> as <u>kneck</u> (to conform to spellings like <u>know</u> and <u>knot</u>).

The fifth discrepancy on the list may be said to be a special case of the fourth. Single phonemes are often represented by <u>different</u> graphemes or combinations of graphemes when graphemic combinations from the spelling systems of other languages have been taken into English unchanged. The representation of /š/ by the grapheme combination <u>ch</u> is recognizably French in such words as <u>champagne</u>, <u>chemise</u> and <u>chauffeur</u>. Tennessee Williams uses the Eye Dialect spelling <u>show-fer</u> for <u>chauffeur</u> in <u>Baby Doll</u>, substituting a "native" grapheme combination <u>sh</u> for the combination felt to be foreign, but not indicating a pronunciation other than a standard one. When J. J. Hooper spells <u>lieutenant</u> as <u>lewtenant</u> he is doing the same thing. Zona Gale uses the spelling <u>randevoo</u> for <u>rendezvous</u> /randəvu/, thus using the grapheme <u>e</u> to represent /ə/ or /ɪ/ in place of French <u>ez</u>, and also replacing the French <u>ous</u> for /u/ by a common English representation <u>oo</u>. Similar substitutions of common "native" grapheme combinations for combinations felt to be "foreign" may be seen in Eggleston's spelling <u>budwoir</u> for <u>boudoir</u>, and James Whitcomb Riley's

spelling etikett for etiquette.

The sixth discrepancy is the fact that graphemic combinations often do not take into account the effect of stress on pronunciation. Quite a few words in the English language have different pronunciations when they occur in an unstressed position in a sentence from those they have in a stressed position: for example, you in a stressed position is pronounced /ju/, while in an unstressed position you is either /jʊ/ or /jə/; the word and is /ænd/ in a stressed position but has a number of pronunciations including /ən/, /n̩/, /ənd/, /ŋ/, /ɛnd/, /n̩d/, /ɛn/, /n/, and /m̩/ when in an unstressed position; the indefinite article a is /e/ in a stressed position but /ə/ in an unstressed position. Articles, prepositions, conjunctions, and pronouns are quite often found in unstressed positions in a sentence, and for the most part they have differing stressed and unstressed pronunciations. The writing system, however, does not allow for these differences in pronunciations due to differences in stress. Each word has only one standard spelling regardless of stress.

Writers of Eye Dialect have made frequent use of the fact that the standard spellings of many words do not accurately represent the sound of the words when they occur in unstressed positions. One group of words that has often been represented by Eye Dialect forms when unstressed is the personal pronouns he, her, his and him. In unstressed positions standard pronunciations of these words are /ɪ/

or /i/, /ər/, /ɪz/, and /ɪm/ respectively--that is, with no /h/. Sinclair Lewis in _Babbitt_ and Tennessee Williams in _The Glass Menagerie_ both use the Eye Dialect form '_er_ to represent _her_ in unstressed position. In _The Red Badge of Courage_ Stephen Crane uses '_is_ to represent _his_ in the sentence "I wonner where he got 'is stren'th from." To have been strictly consistent Crane should have written '_e_ for the _he_ in the sentence since it is also in an unstressed position, and he did exactly that on other occasions as in the sentence, "He run, didn't 'e?" Booth Tarkington in "Mister Antonio" writes '_im_ for _him_ when unstressed. All of these forms represent standard pronunciations, and in each case the "silent _h_" is represented by an apostrophe.

Much the same situation exists in the very frequent use of Eye Dialect forms to represent _them_, or more accurately, _hem_ in unstressed positions. The unstressed pronunciation /əm/ is represented by some writers with '_em_ and by others with '_im_, a standard pronunciation though some people might avoid it when they think about it, under the mistaken impression that it is an abbreviation for _them_. Miller, Williams, Lewis, Harte and Crane, among others, use '_em_; Crane also uses '_im_, as does Faulkner. According to _A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English_, "when unstressed, _hem_, the native English word for 'them' lost its [h] sound just as do _he_, _her_, _his_, and _him_ when

unstressed."[10] It is from hem that /əm/ or /m̩/ has
developed, not from them.

The word have is likewise pronounced differently
in stressed and unstressed positions. The stressed form
is /hæv/ while the unstressed form is /əv/. The standard
spelling of the word represents fairly well the stressed
form, but it obviously is a poor representation of the
unstressed form. A better representation of the unstressed
form is found in the many contractions such as could've
for could have, would've for would have, might've for might
have, etc. A very prevalent Eye Dialect form for have in
unstressed position is of. A typical use of of in this
way occurs in Ring Lardner's "Haircut" in the remark made
by one of the characters, "You must of been drinkin' some
of your aw de cologne." Garson Kanin in Born Yesterday
uses could of for could've. The sound is exactly the same,
though the appearance and effect are different.[11]

The conjunction and, which in unstressed position
has a variety of pronunciations some of which are dependent
on the phoneme coming before or after, has produced a number
of Eye Dialect spellings. The most common ones appear to
be an', an and 'n. Faulkner has used the rather unusual
spelling en for and in unstressed position. Williams has
used 'n in "look 'n see, honey" where one would expect /ŋ/

---

[10]Kenyon and Knott, p. 145, s.v. 'em.

[11]The apostrophe of could've indicates /ə/.

because of the phoneme /k/ preceding, and in "Some time come back to our town 'n see us, hear?" where the pronunciations /ŋ/ or /ən/ are more likely.

Another word whose unstressed pronunciation has been productive of Eye Dialect forms is the word of. The usual unstressed pronunciations are /əv/ and (before consonants) /ə/. Sinclair Lewis in Babbitt uses both o' and a to render /ə/ in practically the same phonemic environment. In one case he refers to a "couple o' girls" using o' for /ə/ and in another case he refers to a "coupla blankets" using a for /ə/. Tennessee Williams uses a to represent /ə/ in "lay offa them bananas," a bit of dialogue in which only the grammar is nonstandard. Other Eye Dialect spellings of of are the result of substituting the grapheme v for the grapheme f to indicate the voiced character of the second phoneme in /əv/. Eggleston uses ov and G. W. Harris uses ove, presumably by analogy with love, dove, shove, but not with move or clove.

The /ə/ that is most often the vowel pronunciation in unstressed syllables in English is often represented in Eye Dialect by an apostrophe. Examples of this are found in Crane's "we're goin' t'morrah" in which unstressed to /tə/ is spelled t', and in Arthur Miller's y'know for unstressed you in you know /jəno/. Unstressed you has, for that matter, produced a variety of Eye Dialect forms: Stephen Crane's yeh, Tennessee Williams' yuh, Arthur Miller's ya (in addition to y' given above), and Sinclair

Lewis' <u>juh</u> (which appears to be a form representing <u>you</u>
when the word preceding it is understood to be <u>did</u> or <u>do</u>
(/ǰu wɔnt/ some of this coffee?).

Lack of stress is responsible for another group
of Eye Dialect spellings in connection with words in which
a vowel has been syncopated in an unstressed syllable.
The pronunciation of such a word has lost the syllable
while the standard spelling still retains it. A standard
pronunciation of the word <u>company</u>, for example, is /kʌmpnɪ/,
with loss of the unstressed second syllable, though the
standard spelling still retains the letter <u>a</u> which repre-
sents that syllable. But writers have recognized the
discrepancy and used such Eye Dialect spellings as <u>comp'ny</u>.
Similar situations are responsible for such examples of
Eye Dialect as Williams' <u>awf'ly</u> for <u>awfully</u> /ɔflɪ/ and his
<u>practickly</u> for <u>practically</u> /præktɪklɪ/, and Faulkner's
<u>mystry</u> for <u>mystery</u> /mɪstrɪ/. The word <u>business</u> /bɪznɪs/
has been given such Eye Dialect spellings as <u>bizness</u>,
<u>bisness</u> and <u>bus'ness</u> by various writers. The spelling
<u>ev'ry</u> for <u>every</u> is another popular Eye Dialect form.
Sinclair Lewis takes advantage of this lack of correspondence
between pronunciation and spelling when he spells <u>opera</u> as
<u>op'ra</u> in <u>Main Street</u>.

The phoneme /ə/ occurs in a great number of un-
stressed syllables in English. As one authority puts it:
"Every Modern English vowel occurring in a syllable that
receives neither primary nor secondary stress approximates

one or the other of the relaxed vowels [ə] and [ɪ]."[12]
Since there is no one standard graphemic representation
of /ə/, writers of Eye Dialect have had considerable
leeway in choosing the grapheme they wish to represent it.
One of the most common choices is u--the prevalence of the
spelling wuz for was /wəz/ in unstressed position is a
good example of it.

A further discrepancy between the written and
spoken language is the fact that graphemic combinations
representing standard spellings do not allow for the effect
of adjacent words on pronunciation. A good example of
this effect may be seen in the frequent loss of a consonant
when the final consonant of a word is the same as the
beginning consonant of the word following it. A standard
pronunciation of "want to" is /wɔntə/, with only one /t/
sound. A dialect writer, recognizing that one of the t's
in the spelling is superfluous, may drop one and still
indicate the standard pronunciation of the two words taken
together. Stephen Crane, among many others, has done this
with this spelling wanta. The form is pure Eye Dialect.
James Whitcomb Riley represents the loss of one /d/ in
wild ducks /wɑɪldʌks/ with his Eye Dialect form wile-ducks.
He also gets rid of one d in the spelling of good deal
/gʊdil/ by spelling good'eal, replacing the second d with
an apostrophe and creating an Eye Dialect spelling. Next

---

[12]Robertson, pp. 107-108.

_to_ becomes _nex'tu_ in a G. W. Harris story.

Sometimes the effect of an adjacent word is more complicated than the simple loss of one of two identical consonants. There may be an assimilation of the final consonant of the first word to the initial consonant of the second. For example, the words _have_ /hæv/ and _to_ /tu/ when pronounced in sequence are /hæftə/. Thurber and Nugent in _The Male Animal_ use an Eye Dialect spelling, _hafta_, which reflects this assimilation. The same may be said of the form _usta_ for _used to_ in John Steinbeck's _Of Mice and Men_. The final /d/ of _used_ /juzd/ has been unvoiced due to assimilation with the unvoiced /t/ of _to_ /tu/ which follows it. (The final _a_ of _hafta_ and _usta_ represents /ə/.) Sometimes it is the following sound which is assimilated to that which precedes it. A standard pronunciation of _what do you_ in a sentence such as "What do you want?" is /hwɑtəjə/. The /d/ of _do_ has been unvoiced due to assimilation with the preceding /t/ of _what_. Arthur Miller represents the pronunciation of the words together with his spelling _whatta ya_--a spelling that represents a standard pronunciation and thus must be classified as Eye Dialect.

Another interesting example of the effect of an adjacent word is the pronunciation of the two words _don't_ and _know_ separately as compared with their pronunciation together in normal sequence in a sentence. Individually _don't_ is /dont/ and _know_ is /no/. But together in a

sentence such as "I don't know" they may be pronounced as
/dəno/, /dono/ or /don no/--all standard pronunciations.
The /t/ of don't has been assimilated to the /n/ of know.
This simplification of the consonant cluster which results
when don't is followed by a word beginning with a conso-
nant is frequently encountered. Some other examples are
don't think /donθɪŋk/ and don't believe /donbəliv/ or
/dombəliv/. The Eye Dialect form dunno for don't know
is used by Sidney Howard in his play, They Knew What They
Wanted. This form is a great favorite of those who attempt
to represent nonstandard speech.

The eighth discrepancy is the fact that graphemic
combinations do not take into account that speech is a
continuous stream--it is not a series of discrete, separate
sound units corresponding to words on the printed page.
It is true that we recognize slight retardations in the
flow of speech which we mark /+/ and refer to as "open
juncture," but it cannot be said that the space between
words on the written page always represents open juncture.
In many cases the space grapheme is present in standard
writing when open juncture is not present, and writers of
Eye Dialect have taken advantage of some of these cases
to produce spellings which omit the space grapheme. The
words "hell of a" have been run together in such spellings
as "helluva" and "heluva," and "whale of a" has been spelled
whaleuva, by analogy with "helluva." The elimination of
the space grapheme is evident in many of the forms mentioned

in connection with other discrepancies--it accounts for such spellings as gotta for got to and dunno for don't know.

Manufacturing alternative spellings.--Having catalogued the various discrepancies between the written and spoken language and how they have allowed Eye Dialect spellings to develop, we now turn to the problems in graphics that confront the writer of Eye Dialect in arriving at alternative spellings. It has been stated earlier that any dialect spelling--whether it be Eye Dialect, Regional Dialect or Substandard Dialect--should be satisfactory from the standpoint of (1) context, (2) similarity of appearance, and (3) similarity of pronunciation, so that the reader will be able to recognize what word (or words) is being represented in a nonstandard form. To "understand" the dialect the reader must be able to associate the nonstandard spellings with the standard spellings. The matters of context and similarity of appearance have been covered in sufficient detail already, but the matter of similarity of pronunciation is complicated and must be considered further here.

The writer of Eye Dialect knows the pronunciation he is trying to represent with a nonstandard spelling, but he is faced with the problem of selecting graphemes that will convey that pronunciation to the reader. Since there is not a one-to-one relationship between graphemes and phonemes in English, he cannot be sure that his choice of

graphemes will necessarily convey the desired phonemes.
For example, if he wishes to replace the grapheme repre-
senting the vowel /ɪ/ in hit, should he use the ee of
been, /bɪn/, the o of women /wɪmɪn/, the u of busy /bɪzɪ/,
the y of myth /mɪθ/ or the ui of build /bɪld/? Each
grapheme or grapheme combination represents /ɪ/ in the
examples given. The question arises as to whether there
is a "usual" or "most common" grapheme that ordinarily
represents each phoneme and which can be counted on to
bring that particular phoneme to the reader's mind.

Robert A. Hall, Jr., believes that there is a
fairly regular graphemic representation of English phonemes
and in Sound and Spelling in English he gives a list of
phonemes and the graphemes by which they are most often
represented.[13] The list was arrived at by Hall after
repeating nonsense words to his family and asking them to
spell them, and then writing nonsense words and asking
them to pronounce them. From their responses he was able
to decide what graphemic symbols were most often brought
to mind by hearing certain sounds, and also which phonemes
were suggested to the mind when certain graphemic symbols
were seen. It is not necessary to give the complete list
here; an example or two from it will suffice. Of the many
ways that /š/ may be represented graphemically, for example,

---

[13]Sound and Spelling in English (Philadelphia:
Chilton Company, 1961), p. 25.

sh is taken to be the usual way. The usual way of repre-
senting /ɪ/ is with i as in hit, rather than such alter-
natives as the o in women or the ee in been. Hall found
that every phoneme has a graphemic representation which
is more usual than the possible alternatives, and that,
with a few exceptions, each of these graphemic representa-
tions represented only that particular phoneme. Exceptions
were oo which represented both /ʊ/ and /u/, th which
represented both /ð/ and /θ/ and z which represented both
/z/ and /ž/.

In addition, it should be pointed out that some
of the "less usual" graphemic representations are limited
to certain positions in a word--gh, for example, represents
/f/ only in final position while ti represents /š/ only
before a vowel grapheme standing for weakly stressed /ə/
(nation, initial, militia). It is this fact which accounts,
at least partially, for the humor in the spelling ghoti
for fish. The gh and ti are hopelessly out of position.
Such positional limitations do impose a practical restric-
tion on the writer in producing nonstandard spellings.

In view of Hall's findings, it would appear that
the writer of Eye Dialect will solve the problem of
pronunciation similarity if he uses the graphemes that are
usual or "regular" ones for representing the phonemes of
the word or words involved. Of course, in many cases
this will not be possible because the "regular" graphemic
representation will be that found in the standard spelling.

In these cases the Eye Dialect spelling should logically
use the second most "regular" graphemic representations.
If only one graphemic representation is at all "regular"--
such as p for /p/ at the beginning of a word--then no Eye
Dialect spelling is feasible for that phoneme. In fact,
those words for which Eye Dialect spellings are most often
substituted are almost invariably words which have an
unusual or "irregular" graphemic representation of one or
more phonemes. Words like liquor (with its qu represent-
ation of /k/), minute (with its u grapheme for /ɪ/), and
women (with its o grapheme for /ɪ/) are good examples.
Apparently the writer of Eye Dialect unconsciously
recognizes those places where the grapheme representing
a particular phoneme is not the "regular" one.

Differences do appear in the Eye Dialect forms
arrived at by different writers as alternative spellings
for the same word. It should be of interest to take note
of several alternative spellings, and to evaluate which
form is clearest from the standpoint of the reader.

The word business has been spelled in a number of
ways that may be considered Eye Dialect. Let us compare
two of them, the bizness of Robert Penn Warren and the
bus'ness of Tennessee Williams. From the standpoint of
similarity of appearance the form used by Williams is
probably more easily recognized than that used by Warren.
It changes only one letter, and the omitted i is replaced
by an apostrophe. From the standpoint of similarity of

pronunciation, however, Warren's form seems preferable.
The substitution of i for u in the first syllable is
actually a change from an infrequent way of representing
/ɪ/ to the most usual one. The replacing of s with z is
also a change from a less frequent way of representing /z/
to a more frequent one. The complete elimination of the i
is in keeping with the fact that it is not pronounced
anyway: in current English the word is /bɪznɪs/, not
/bɪzɪnɪs/. The Williams' spelling, bus'ness, on the other
hand, though it has made only one small change in the
standard spelling, at first glance may appear to indicate
/bʌsnəs/. This is because the reader is familiar with
the word bus, and also because bus means /bɪz/ to him only
in busy and business. Williams has changed the spelling
enough that the word he intends to represent may not be
immediately obvious, and the reader may be misled into
assuming /bʌs/ for bus.

The word says has been given alternative spellings
by a number of writers. There would appear to be two
reasons for the notice they have paid to says: first, it
is a word that occurs quite often in dialogue, particularly
when a story is told in the historical present; second,
the grapheme combination ays is a very unusual way of
representing the phoneme combination /ɛz/. Bret Harte and
G. W. Harris use the Eye Dialect spelling sez, whereas
Stephen Crane and James Russell Lowell use another Eye
Dialect spelling ses. In both cases the unusual ays is

changed--the writers agree on the usual $\underline{e}$ for /ɛ/, but
they disagree on the representation of /z/. According to
Hall's list, the normal and most frequent representation
of /z/ is with $\underline{z}$, and thus the Harte and Harris form is
to be preferred, if indeed there is any good reason for
using either.

Sometimes there is good reason why the graphemic
symbol which usually represents a voiceless phoneme is
found where a symbol for a voiced phoneme might seem
called for. Bret Harte spelled $\underline{was}$ as $\underline{wus}$, for example.
The word $\underline{was}$, by itself, may be represented phonemically
by /wəz/ when in an unstressed position. But Harte's
$\underline{was}$ precedes the word $\underline{sick}$, and the final /z/ of $\underline{was}$ is
unvoiced through assimilation with the unvoiced /s/ which
immediately follows. Thus Harte is phonetically accurate
in his spelling of $\underline{was}$ as $\underline{wus}$ in this particular instance.[14]

Another word that has been given a variety of Eye
Dialect spellings is the word $\underline{clothes}$ /kloz/.[15] The
spelling $\underline{close}$, a form used by George Washington Harris
and Artemus Ward, has the disadvantage of being the standard
spelling of two different words--the verb $\underline{close}$ /kloz/ and
the adjective $\underline{close}$ /klos/. While it is true that within
the context of a sentence confusion is not likely in this

---

[14]Harte is not always consistent in this respect
however, since logically he should use $\underline{wuz}$ when voiced
sounds follow--instead he often sticks with $\underline{wus}$.

[15]See above, p. 74.

case, such will not always be the case where the Eye
Dialect form actually is the standard spelling of another
word. And even in the case of close for clothes, it
seems probable that the reader will be somewhat distracted
at first due to his normal association of close with
meanings having nothing to do with wearing apparel, and
(in the case of the adjective close /klos/) with another
pronunciation.

The Eye Dialect spelling clo'se, as used by
Tennessee Williams is preferable to close in that the
apostrophe precludes the reader's mistaking the word for
either the verb or adjective spelled close. The apostrophe,
as well as indicating /ə/, may also signal that certain
letters have been omitted, which from the standpoint of
similarity of appearance is desirable. However, with
respect to similarity of pronunciation, the form used by
Williams is inferior to a third form, clo'es, used by James
Russell Lowell. Lowell's form indicates the loss of letters
with an apostrophe, and, in addition, it uses a series of
graphemes, oes (omitting the apostrophe since it does not
affect the pronunciation), which are unmistakably /oz/ in
such familiar words as toes, hoes, Joes, foes, etc. The
oes spelling clearly indicates the voiced phoneme /z/,
while ose may indicate either /z/ or /s/.

The relation of Eye Dialect to matters of reading
and to spelling reform.--Related to the problems of Eye
Dialect and graphics previously discussed are two other

problems. The first of these has to do with Eye Dialect
as it is related to the process we call reading. The
details of this process by which we get information from
the printed page are not fully agreed upon. Scholars
disagree on one issue in particular: Can the reader
receive information directly from the graphemic symbols
on a page of reading material without going through an
intermediate process of pronouncing the words, either
aloud or to himself?

The view that there must be an intermediate stage
in which the graphemes are pronounced is clearly expressed
by Robert A. Hall, Jr., in Sound and Spelling in English.[16]
It is his view that the graphemes of a word--its "spelling"--
have no "real-life" meaning until they are sounded as
morphemes. "Real-life" meaning he defines as "the way in
which linguistic features symbolize the facts of the
universe in which we live." The graphemes themselves,
until pronounced, have only "linguistic meaning" according
to Hall; that is, they symbolize nothing except the pho-
nemic structure of the word they represent. "Real-life"
meaning can be conveyed only by spoken morphemes and not
by graphemes. He uses a diagram to show the relationship
between written shape, spoken linguistic form, and real-
life situation:

---

[16]Hall, p. 5.

| Written shape | Linguistic meaning | Spoken Linguistic Form (consisting of phonemes) | Real-life meaning | Situation |
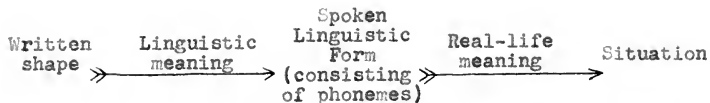
Hall stresses that as far as conveying real-life situations or meaning, it is "naive" to think the relationship between written shape and spoken linguistic form is one of "equality and independence, each referring directly, in its own way, to the real-life situation." He uses the following diagram to illustrate this mistaken concept:

Written shape

"Meaning"

Situation

"Meaning"

Spoken Linguistic Form
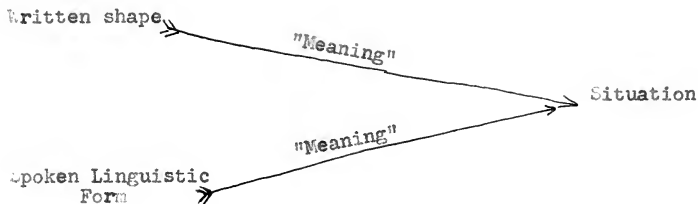
To the objection that may be raised that in silent reading with no movement of the lips there can hardly be any pronouncing or sounding of phonemes, Hall answers, that psychologists have shown "every time anyone writes or reads something, an act of 'inner speech' takes place but is inhibited on the level of muscular performance."[17] Thus the pronouncing is taking place even though

---

[17]Ibid., p. 2.

it is not in evidence.

This view of the relationship of the written language and the spoken language is, of course, of primary importance in determining how Hall feels about the teaching of reading. As he puts it, "any attempt to teach reading by trying to correlate written words directly with real life meaning (reading for meaning) without going through the spoken linguistic forms which the written shapes symbolize, is fundamentally erroneous and foredoomed to failure."[18]

A different view of the situation was that taken by Henry Bradley in his work, On the Relations Between Spoken and Written Language.[19] He pointed out that the Semitic alphabet is usually written as a consonant-script without any vowels (though vowel marks may be added). The consonantal outlines could themselves be understood though they did not give an actual phonetic indication of the sound of the word. He concludes that the accomplished reader does not care whether his language is spelled phonetically or not. "What is important is that the group of letters before him shall be that which habit has led him to associate with a certain word." The eye conveys the meaning to the reader and no middle state in which the
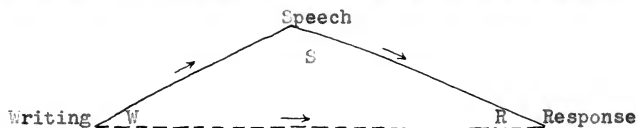
[18]Ibid., p. 5.

[19]Henry Bradley, On the Relations Between Spoken and Written Language (London: Oxford University Press, 1919), quoted in Robertson, pp. 11-13.

word is sounded is necessary. The following diagram[20]
illustrates this by-passing of the intermediate stage:

Speech

S

Writing W _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ → _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ R Response

       The usual path from writing to response is over
the solid lines through the intermediate position of
speech. But the reader soon learns to bypass this inter-
mediate stage and go directly from writing to response as
indicated by the dotted line in the diagram. This, accord-
ing to Bradley, is what occurs in rapid silent reading--
while some of the key words are probably pronounced, most
of the words deliver their meaning purely by sight without
any sound association. If this is the case, then writing
is not for the sole purpose of representing sounds in a
language, as is borne out by the fact that certain definite
examples may be given in which meaning is conveyed by sight
alone rather than sound: the use of capital letters for
proper names, the use of quotation marks, the different
spellings which exist for homophones such as so, sew, and
sow. In poetry "eye rhymes" are sometimes used which owe
their effect not to similarity in sound but to similarity
in appearance. Such examples help support the argument

[20]Robertson, p. 12.

that writing may convey real life meanings directly without going through an intermediate sound stage.

The consideration of Eye Dialect is germane to this argument because Eye Dialect has been defined as dialect which is detected only by the eye and not the ear. At first glance it would seem that it would provide one more example of meaning being conveyed directly from the written form to the reader without an intervening stage in which the words are pronounced. For after all, the meaning conveyed is due to the differences in appearance of the Eye Dialect spelling and the standard spelling, not to any difference in pronunciation between the two.

The situation is not that simple, however. It is true that the reader is made aware of the fact that the form is nonstandard by its spelling and not its sound. This awareness is a form of "meaning" that is conveyed to the reader directly from the graphemes. But there is another kind of meaning that must be conveyed to the reader, and that is the meaning that the form carries as a symbol of something in the real world. For example, the Eye Dialect form minit for minute lets the reader know immediately by sight that it is a nonstandard form. But the reader also needs to know that the form is the graphic symbol for "a unit of time consisting of sixty seconds." And it may be that this "real-life" meaning can only be conveyed through the intermediate pronouncing step as claimed by Hall.

Actually it appears that an Eye Dialect form conveys meaning on two levels to the reader: (1) it conveys the impression of being nonstandard, (2) it conveys the "real-life" meaning. The conveying of two levels of meaning is not confined to Eye Dialect forms by any means. Take the case of the aforementioned homophones so, sew, and sow /so/. The sound of /so/ can only tell the hearer that one of the three words has been pronounced; the appearance of the graphemic combination tells him which one. Both pieces of information appear to be necessary.

The fact that words can convey two different levels of meaning would seem to resolve all the important points on which there is disagreement between those who insist on an intermediate sound stage between grapheme and meaning, and those who insist such a stage is unnecessary. This fact states, in essence, that both sides are probably right and that the seeming contradictions do not exist. The psychologist is correct in saying that an act of speech (whether audible or suppressed) accompanies all our reading, and it is not unreasonable to assume that "real-life" meaning is conveyed through this act of speech. On the other hand, the special meanings found in capital letters, homophones, and Eye Dialect forms are meanings of a different sort on a different level which are not conveyed by the act of speech. Yet they are no less real than "real-life" meaning. The opposing sides have been

unaware that there are two different levels of meaning,
and that they have been using the word "meaning" to cover
both levels. This usage has led to seeming contradictions
which actually do not exist. It is the particular virtue
of Eye Dialect forms that they, by their very nature,
illustrate clearly how both levels of meaning can exist
in the same word.

Another subject which is in some degree related
to Eye Dialect is the matter of Spelling Reform. Most
Spelling Reform movements have had as their goal a more
consistent representation of phonemes by graphemes. Since
Eye Dialect is a quasi-phonetic, though nonstandard, way
of spelling, it is natural, if ironical, that Eye Dialect
spellings often coincide with spellings recommended by
advocates of Spelling Reform. It might even be argued
that Eye Dialect is an unconscious movement toward Spelling
Reform, and that the fact that Eye Dialect is easily read
and accepted willingly by readers speaks well for the
readability and acceptance of the new spellings such as
are advocated by the Spelling Reformers.

Actually the aims of Eye Dialect writing and
Spelling Reform are quite different, however. The writer
of Eye Dialect wishes to convey the impression of differ-
entness with his nonstandard spellings. The advocate of
Spelling Reform is not striving for "differentness" but
for consistency. If Spelling Reform, which succeeds to
some extent in making the "fit" of the written and spoken

languages more exact, ever really "catches on," it will become increasingly difficult to find opportunities for Eye Dialect. If English spelling should ever become entirely consistent and perfectly representative of the sounds of the language, Eye Dialect could no longer exist.[21]

Furthermore, the acceptance the reader gives to the Eye Dialect form is a particular type of acceptance. It tells him that the speaker is different--perhaps, depending on the situation, ludicrous, uneducated, intoxicated, or any one of a number of other possibilities. The Eye Dialect form just doesn't "look right." And neither for a long time, would many of the spellings urged by advocates of Spelling Reform.

---

[21]However, it might be noted that in this case it would then be possible to represent a peculiarity in speech that there is no way of representing now. It would be possible to indicate "spelling pronunciations," since spelling raspberry with the p and Christmas with the t would indicate that the person speaking actually "sounded" those usually silent letters.

List of Eye Dialect Forms
Used in Chapter III

The following is a list of Eye Dialect forms used
as examples in Chapter III. The number in parentheses
after the author's name may be used to determine the
literary work in which the form appears. This number
refers to an entry of like number in the list of "Literary
Works Examined" on pages 117-119.

> a - Lewis (14), p. 56.
>   - Williams (41), p. 101.
>
> apposil - Eggleston (5), p. 196.
>
> Arkansas - Faulkner (31), p. 683.
>
> awf'ly - Williams (35), p. 91.
>
> bin - Lanier (27, vol. I), p. 40.
>   - Warren (34), p. 1067.
>
> bizness - Browne (2), p. 43.
>   - Warren (34), p. 1070.
>
> budwoir - Eggleston (6), p. 113.
>
> bus'ness - Williams (36), p. 132.
>
> butes - Harte (10), p. 172.
>
> clo'es - Lowell (29), p. 220.
>
> close - Browne (2), p. 42.
>   - G. W. Harris (9), p. 402.
>
> coffy - Faulkner (31), p. 725.
>
> conversation - Browne (2), p. 39.

could of - Kanin (13), p. 192.

dam' - Tarkington (26), p. 29.

dawg - Faulkner (31), p. 178.
     - Williams (38), p. 4.

deth - Hooper (11), p. 370.

dunno - Howard (12), p. 388.

'e - Crane (4), p. 116.

'em - Crane (4), p. 74.
    - Lewis (14), p. 6.
    - Miller (19), p. 27.
    - Williams (41), p. 24.
    - Harte (10), p. 172.
    - Faulkner (31), p. 180.

en - Faulkner (31), p. 522.

enuf - O'Neill (20), p. 172.

'er - Lewis (14), p. 29.
    - Williams (40), p. 12.

etikett - Riley (30), p. 706.

ev'ry - Crane (4), p. 127.
      - Riley (30), p. 247.
      - Williams (36), p. 11.

facks - Williams (38), p. 4.

fether - Eggleston (7), p. 230.

good'eal - Riley (30), p. 448.

grate - Browne (2), p. 40.
      - Lowell (18), p. 46.

ha'f - Williams (36), p. 192.

ha'f-way - Riley (30), p. 448.

han'some - Eggleston (5), p. 294.

harts - Browne (2), p. 44.

helluva - Howard (12), p. 368.
        - Williams (39), p. 53.

heluva - Crane (4), p. 55.

'im - Crane (4), p. 74.
   - Tarkington (26), p. 23.

'is - Crane (4), p. 100.

juh - Lewis (14), p. 56.

kernel - Faulkner (31), p. 170.

kleen - Hooper (11), p. 379.

kneck - Stuart (25), p. 914.

knockin' - Miller (19), p. 25.

laff - Warren (34), p. 1077.

lewtenant - Hooper (11), p. 370.

lissen - Lewis (14), p. 272.

minit - Browne (2), p. 39.
   - O'Neill (20), p. 194.
   - Marte (10), p. 173.
   - Hooper (11), p. 377.

minnit - Crane (4), p. 96.
   - Stowe (24), p. 236.

mor'gage - Riley (30), p. 536.

mystry - Faulkner (31), p. 180.

'n - Williams (35), p. 17.
   - Williams (39), p. 102.

natcherally - Williams (36), p. 56.

nekkid - Faulkner (31), p. 690.

num - G. W. Harris (9), p. 404.

o' - Lewis (14), p. 18.

of - Lardner (28), p. 23.

op'ra - Lewis (16), p. 242.

ov - Eggleston (7), p. 220.

ove - G. W. Harris (9), p. 400.

practickly - Williams (35), p. 119.

randevoo - Gale (8), p. 142.

sassiety - Lewis (14), p. 21.

sed - Crane (4), p. 48.

ses - Crane (4), p. 48.
    - Lowell (18), p. 46.

sez - G. W. Harris (9), p. 405.
    - Harte (10), p. 170.

show-fer - Williams (36), p. 56.

speshully - O'Neill (20), p. 701.

spirichool - Howard (12), p. 364.

Sun'dy - Riley (30), p. 493.

t' - Crane (4), p. 2.

tellin' - Miller (19), p. 14.

tobakker - Hooper (11), p. 372.

usta - Steinbeck (22), p. 164.

wanta - Crane (4), p. 43.

whaleuva - Lewis (14), p. 36.

whatta ya - Miller (19), p. 28.

wile-ducks - Riley (30), p. 508.

wimin - Browne (2), p. 40.

wimmen - Lanier (27, vol. I), p. 22.
      - Williams (41), p. 37.

wimmin - Harte (10), p. 168.

wun - G. W. Harris (9), p. 400.

wunst - Eggleston (7), p. 67.

ya - Miller (19), p. 14.

yeh – Crane (4), p. 136.

y'know – Miller (19), p. 20.

yuh – Williams (38), p. 18.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

It has been the purpose of this study to first
define and then discuss Eye Dialect from the standpoint
of its use as a literary device and from the standpoint
of the science of graphics. Despite the fact that it has
been used by American writers for over a hundred years,
relatively little has been written about Eye Dialect.
While there are several excellent studies of literary
dialects in general, most of these studies have not seen
fit to do much more than mention Eye Dialect in passing,
while they have concentrated on matters relating to
Regional Dialect and Substandard Dialect. Since Eye
Dialect has had a long history in American dialect-
writing, and since it is still being used to a considerable
degree by American writers today, this study has sought to
clarify the purposes, conditions and problems involved in
its use.

While it has not been possible to say for certain
what a writer had in mind when he decided to use any
particular Eye Dialect spelling (except in certain rare
cases where he has seen fit to tell us), from an extensive
study of the use of Eye Dialect spellings by a number of

authors, certain reasons for their use seem to emerge.
These reasons may be classified as to whether they reflect
conscious use or unconscious use. First, there is the
unconscious use made of Eye Dialect by the writer who
haphazardly attempts to gain an uneducated, humorous, or
grotesque effect by throwing in nonstandard spellings
more or less at random. The pre-Civil War frontier
humorists exemplify this reason in their creation of
"dialect characters." Second, there is the unconscious
use of Eye Dialect by writers who mistakenly believe they
are accurately representing regional or substandard speech.
The "local colorists," whose attempts to depict the actual
speech of a locality logically confined them to the use
of Regional Dialect or Substandard Dialect, often uncon-
sciously lapsed into the use of Eye Dialect. Third, there
is the conscious use of Eye Dialect by writers who feel
that certain spellings like wimmen, likker, sez, and
minnit are traditional in dialect-writing and who are
satisfied to follow the tradition. Finally, there are
those writers who consciously make use of Eye Dialect on
occasion when they find it convenient to do so in creating
some special effect--to depict drunkenness perhaps, or to
show artificiality or non-genuineness in connection with
something.

It is true that some linguists have seen fit to
criticize a writer's use of Eye Dialect as misleading. In
the words of Sumner Ives, "To the extent that an author

relies on this purely visual dialect, he can be said to
be deliberately overstating the ignorance or illiteracy
of his characters."[1] Ives feels that a substantial use
of Eye Dialect reflects on the craftsmanship of the
writer. But linguists are primarily interested in how
accurate the author has been in depicting the actual
regional or substandard speech he has chosen for his
characters. On the other hand, from the standpoint of
the writer, it would seem that Eye Dialect has a legitimate
place in composition. The writer is attempting to delin-
eate character, not to write a treatise on speech peculi-
arities. The purpose of a literary dialect, after all,
is not to arouse wonder at the author's ability as a
student of speech, but to secure sympathetic attention
for his characters.

I feel that this study has made clear the fact
that Eye Dialect has been used by many of our best writers
throughout this country's history, and that it continues
to be used by many outstanding literary men today. It,
therefore, should have been considered a literary device
of considerable importance and fit subject for investiga-
tion; instead Eye Dialect has been generally neglected by
scholars. The present study is, in part, an attempt to
rectify this situation by clarifying the importance of
Eye Dialect as a literary device.

---

[1]Ives, "A Theory of Literary Dialect," p. 147.

In connection with the science of graphics, it
has been pointed out how the creation of Eye Dialect forms
depends on the inexact "fit" of the written and spoken
languages. The discrepancies in "fit" which have produced
the great majority of Eye Dialect forms have been catalogued
and discussed. From the standpoint of graphics as related
to reading, it has been pointed out how Eye Dialect makes
a major contribution toward resolving the controversy in
regard to the process by which we go from written symbol
to meaning; in particular, the fact that Eye Dialect
spellings actually convey meaning on two levels is sig-
nificant in explaining how certain seeming contradictions
are not contradictions at all.

Finally, this study has revealed some interesting
things about the psychology of readers and their knowledge
of their own language. By and large, it seems that readers
will take the writer's word for it that his nonstandard
spellings are significant. If the writer says or implies
that he is depicting the speech of a Southerner, the
reader doesn't stop to consider whether the nonstandard
spellings used are appropriate--in fact, the writer may
be simply using Eye Dialect. Also it seems clear that
most readers are unaware that the printed page does not
reflect speech with complete accuracy. Eye Dialect spell-
ings often take into account such matters as assimilation,
syncopation of vowels, reduction of consonant clusters, etc.,
which occur in actual speech and which standard spellings

often do not take into account. But to the **reader** the standard spellings on the printed page *are* speech, and he may be counted upon to react to Eye Dialect as non-standard in some way. It is this tendency, of course, **which makes Eye Dialect valuable as a literary device.**

BIBLIOGRAPHY

LITERARY WORKS EXAMINED

(The following items are numbered so that they may
be used in conjunction with the list of Eye Dialect forms
on pages 107-111.)

1. A Native Georgian [Augustus Baldwin Longstreet].
    Georgia Scenes. New York: Harper and Brothers,
    1897.

2. Browne, Charles F. The Complete Works of Artemus
    Ward. London: Chatto and Windus, 1910.

3. Crane, Stephen. Maggie, A Girl of the Streets. New
    York: The Modern Library, 1933.

4. _____. The Red Badge of Courage. Edited by Max
    J. Herzberg. New York: D. Appleton-Century
    Company, 1926.

5. Eggleston, Edward. Roxy. New York: Charles Scribner's
    Sons, 1878.

6. _____. The End of the World. New York: Charles
    Scribner's Sons, 1883.

7. _____. The Hoosier Schoolmaster. New York: Grosset
    and Dunlap, 1913.

8. Gale, Zona. Miss Lulu Bett. The Pulitzer Prize Plays.
    Edited by Kathryn Coe and William H. Cordell. New
    York: Random House, 1935.

9. Harris, George Washington. "Mrs. Yardley's Quilting"
    and "Rare Ripe Garden-Seed." The Literature of
    the South. Edited by Richmond Croom Beatty, et
    al. Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company,
    1952, pp. 398-411.

10. Harte, Bret. "How Santa Claus Came to Simpson's Bar."
    American Local-Color Stories. Edited by Harry R.
    Warfel and G. Harrison Orians. New York: American
    Book Company, 1941.

11. Hooper, Johnson Jones. "A Masterpiece in the Ludi-
    crous" and "Simon Suggs Attends a Camp Meeting."
    The Literature of the South. Edited by Richard
    Croom Beatty, et al. Chicago: Scott, Foresman
    and Company, 1952, pp. 369-382.

12. Howard, Sidney. They Knew What They Wanted. Modern
    Plays. Edited by John F. McDermott. New York:
    Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1932.

13. Kanin, Garson. Born Yesterday. Best Plays of the
    Modern American Theatre, Second Series. Edited
    by John Gassner. New York: Crown Publishers,
    1949.

14. Lewis, Sinclair. Babbitt. New York: Harcourt,
    Brace and Company, 1922.

15. _____. Kingsblood Royal. New York: Random
    House, 1947.

16. _____. Main Street. Cleveland: The World
    Publishing Company, 1946.

17. Locke, David Ross. Divers Views, Opinions and Proph-
    ecies of Yoors Trooly Petroleum V. Nasby.
    Cincinnati: R. W. Carroll and Company, 1866.

18. Lowell, James Russell. The Biglow Papers. Philadel-
    phia: Henry Altemus, 1899.

19. Miller, Arthur. Death of a Salesman. New York: The
    Viking Press, 1949.

20. O'Neill, Eugene. Nine Plays. New York: The Modern
    Library, 1932.

21. Riley, James Whitcomb. When the Frost Is on the
    Punkin and Other Poems. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-
    Merrill Company, 1911.

22. Steinbeck, John. Of Mice and Men. New York: Covici-
    Friede, 1937.

23. _____. The Grapes of Wrath. New York: The Modern
    Library, 1939.

24. Stowe, Harriet Beecher. Uncle Tom's Cabin. New York:
    The MacMillan Company, 1930.

25. Stuart, Jesse. "Uncle Jeff." The Literature of the
    South. Edited by Richmond Croom Beatty, et al.
    Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1952, pp.
    909-916.

26. Tarkington, Booth. **Mister Antonio.** New York:
    Samuel French, 1935.

27. **The Centennial Edition of the Works of Sidney Lanier.**
    Vols. I and V. Edited by Charles R. Anderson and
    others. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1945.

28. **The Collected Short Stories of Ring Lardner.** New
    York: The Modern Library, n.d.

29. **The Complete Poetical Works of James Russell Lowell.**
    Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924.

30. **The Complete Poetical Works of James Whitcomb Riley.**
    Garden City, N. Y.: Garden City Publishing
    Company, 1941.

31. **The Portable Faulkner.** Edited by Malcolm Cowley.
    New York: The Viking Press, 1951.

32. **The Short Novels of John Steinbeck.** New York: The
    Viking Press, 1953.

33. Thurber, James and Nugent, Elliot. **The Male Animal.**
    Best Plays of the Modern American Theater. Edited
    by John Gassner. New York: Crown Publishers,
    1961.

34. Warren, Robert Penn. "Billie Potts," **The Literature
    of the South.** Edited by Richmond Croom Beatty, **et
    al.** Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1952,
    pp. 1065-1077.

35. Williams, Tennessee. **A Streetcar Named Desire.** New
    York: New Directions Books, 1947.

36. _____. **Baby Doll.** New York: New Directions Books,
    n. d.

37. _____. **Cat on a Hot Tin Roof.** New York: New
    Directions Books, 1955.

38. _____. **Orpheus Descending with Battle of Angels.**
    New York: New Directions Books, 1958.

39. _____. **Sweet Bird of Youth.** New York: New
    Directions Books, 1959.

40. _____. **The Glass Menagerie. Best Plays of the
    Modern American Theater, Second Series.** Edited by
    John Gassner. New York: Crown Publishers, 1961.

41. _____. **The Rose Tattoo. Best American Plays,
    Fourth Series.** Edited by John Gassner. New York:
    Crown Publishers, Inc., 1958.

WORKS USED FOR REFERENCE

Baugh, Albert C. A History of the English Language. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1957.

Bradley, Henry. On the Relations Between Spoken and Written Language. London: Oxford University Press, 1919.

Francis, W. Nelson. The Structure of American English. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1958.

Gibbs, Wolcott. Review of "A View From the Bridge" in "The Theater" in New Yorker, October 8, 1955, pp. 86, 88-92.

Gleason, H. A., Jr. An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics. Revised Edition. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961.

Hall, Robert A., Jr. Sound and Spelling in English. Philadelphia: Chilton Company, 1961.

Ives, Sumner. "A Theory of Literary Dialect," Tulane Studies in English, II (1950), 137-182.

_____. "The Phonology of the Uncle Remus Stories," Publications of the American Dialect Society, No. 22 (November, 1954).

Kenyon, John Samuel and Knott, Thomas Albert. A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English. Springfield, Mass.: G. C. Merriam Company, 1953.

Kenyon, John Samuel. American Pronunciation. 6th edition, revised. Ann Arbor: George Wahr, Publishers, 1935.

Krapp, George Philip. The English Language in America. Vol. I. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, 1960.

Krapp, George Philip. "The Psychology of Dialect Writing," The Bookman, LXIII (December, 1926), pp. 522-527.

McAtee, W. L. Studies in the Vocabularies of Hoosier Authors: Edward Eggleston (1837-1902). Chapel Hill, N. C.: Printed by the Compiler, 1961.

McDavid, Raven I., Jr. "American English Dialects," The Structure of American English by W. Nelson Francis. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1958. McDavid's article is Chapter Nine of The Structure of American English.

Randall, Dale B. J. "Dialect in the Verse of 'The Hoosier Poet,'" _American Speech_, **XXXV** (1960), pp. 36-50.

Robertson, Stuart. _The Development of Modern English_. Revised by Frederick G. Cassidy. 2nd edition. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1954.

Wentworth, Harold. _American Dialect Dictionary_. **New** York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1944.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Paul Hull Bowdre, Jr., was born January 3, 1926.
He grew up in Hernando, Mississippi, and was graduated
from Hernando High School in May, 1943. In June, 1947,
he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering
from the United States Naval Academy and was commissioned
an Ensign in the United States Navy. After commissioning
he served for five years in the fleet and overseas.
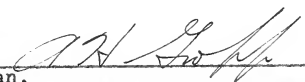
After coming off active duty Mr. Bowdre attended
Southwestern at Memphis as a special student and then did
work toward his Master of Arts degree in English at the
University of Mississippi. He received this degree in
January, 1961. During the years of 1955-1959 he was
employed in the Loan and Foreign Departments of The First
National Bank of Memphis. In September, 1959, he enrolled
at the University of Florida and worked toward the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in English until September, 1962, at
which time he was employed as an Associate Professor of
English by West Georgia College.

Mr. Bowdre is married to the former Patty Smith
of Memphis, Tennessee, and is the father of two daughters.
He is a member of the South Atlantic Modern Language Asso-
ciation, American Association of University Professors,

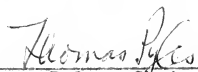Phi Eta Sigma, and Sigma Alpha Epsilon.

This dissertation was prepared under the direction of the chairman of the candidate's supervisory committee and has been approved by all members of that committee. It was submitted to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate Council, and was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.
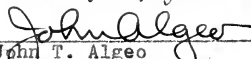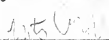
April, 1964

Dean,
College of Arts and Sciences

Dean, Graduate School

Supervisory Committee:

Thomas Pyles, Chairman

John T. Algeo

Jayne C. Harder

Ants Oras

Oscar F. Jones